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LINCOLN DODGE, LAYMAN



Charles L. White



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Lincoln Dodge, Layman

INTRODUCTION

"Lincoln Dodge, Layman" was published in June, 1911. The first edition of five thousand was quickly sold, and a second edition of six thousand was printed the following November. It was published by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, in the name of the Mission Press, and has been steadily called for during the last three and a half years. I have reason to believe that it has found its way into nearly every country in the world where missionaries are preaching the gospel.

One friend of the cause purchased three thousand six hundred copies, and sent them to long lists of missionaries at home and abroad, and to every student in academies, colleges, and seminaries in the United States preparing for the Baptist ministry.

The volume now appears in its third edition, under the imprint of the American Baptist Publication Society, to which the plates of the book have been loaned, in the hope that it will have a still wider reading and be helpful in advancing the interests of the Master's kingdom at home and abroad.

CHARLES L. WHITE

New York, April 26, 1916

The Belated Laymen

THE train was an hour late at the Junction, and a group of men, returning from the Association, had plenty of time to become better acquainted. There were six of them, and as it happened, they represented six of the twenty-seven churches which had sent one or more delegates to the annual meeting. Five of these laymen had frequently met on similar occasions, but one was a stranger to most of the others. It was the first Association that he had attended in many years.

After the usual comments on the addresses which had been delivered Judge Comstock, the oldest of the group, remarked:

"Well, it is certainly a new day, when the three great missionary Societies agree to save time and money by sending one secretary instead of three to represent their work."

"Yes," said Doctor Judkins, "he did a fair thing, too, by each one, and if I had not known, I couldn't have told whether he was a home or foreign mission speaker. But I also noticed that the women's Societies kept to their old custom, and had their two secretaries and also their state leaders with them

at our little Association."

"Well," remarked Deacon Jackson, whose wife was prominent in the foreign mission circle in her church, "the women are quick to take a hint, I tell you, from the men. Don't you worry about them; they will not keep up this extra traveling expense long, I reckon. The women, however, are such missionary hustlers, that I can forgive them if they do it for a year or two longer, for they have taught the secretaries of the large Societies many things about methods of raising money."

"They have indeed," said the Judge.

"Yes, and I told my wife, before she left on the earlier train, that I really believed that the women's home and foreign mission Societies have their work so well organized, and such inspiring literature to distribute, that they could get on at these associational meetings without any speakers but local talent, and thus go one step further than the larger Societies, and send their secretaries only to the Conventions."

"You are right," said Judge Comstock, "for what Association needs a special speaker on women's missions, that has such a woman as that Vassar College graduate, who is the wife of Deacon Jack-

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son's pastor. Well, isn't she an encyclopedia and a de luxe edition, too?"

"Yes," replied the Deacon, "and she's an artesian well also on missions. We have learned that she spent two years visiting the women's colleges in the United States, after she was graduated from Vassar, and refused an \$1,800.00 offer as the dean of a woman's college, to marry a poor minister with a salary of \$1,200.00."

"You don't pay Mr. Arnold \$1,200.00 do you, Deacon Jackson?" inquired the Judge.

A load of hay at that moment passed and the Deacon turned to look at it and then replied:

"Yes, we began nine months ago on January first to do so, but to be strictly correct, we gave \$1,000.00 when the minister brought his bride to us the year before.

"We were afraid she wouldn't be contented, but we have never seen a sign of that yet, and since she came!—Well I tell you brethren, things have been 'going some' in our church. The pastor was a good preacher, and growing better every week, but after he had been with us about six months, a part of which time he had been down sick with the grippe, without any warning he preached a sermon

on Systematic Giving, emphasized the necessity of making an every-member canvass for all missionary apportionments called for in our budget, and also advocated a second every-member canvass for the current expenses of the church. He said that Christian character naturally adopted this form of giving just as it led to personal work and definite social service.

"Perhaps you don't think that sermon created a sensation! Well, I myself told the pastor that to put his suggestions into effect, meant such a revolution, that I must say I trembled for the success of his pastorate. The strongest members of the church also told him straight to his face, that it would never do to give up the pew rents and have free sittings. Yes, and before the next Tuesday night prayer meeting, we were all in a mix and at a standstill, and felt terribly bad, for the minister was to be married the following day and was to bring his wife to town the Saturday after."

"How did it turn out?" asked the Judge.

The Deacon replied, "I was about to tell you, and stopped to get my breath, for I am always excited when I tell this story. No one said anything the following Sunday about the sermon the week

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before, but everybody fell in love with the minister's wife."

"That introduced a new element," said the Judge.

"Yes, and a big one, too, for the next Thursday, in responding to an address, which I made on behalf of the church at a reception, at which we gave the minister and his wife \$75.00 as a little present, the pastor referred to his sermon on 'Systematic Giving,' and said that he very much doubted if they would ever have more of the members of the church present on any one occasion, and hoped that before they parted, a vote could be taken, at least informally, on his proposition for a double canvass for the benevolences and current expenses.

"Well, we were taken entirely by surprise, and did as he asked, as it was only an informal vote. But we have never voted again on that subject. And the pastor's wife said, with a smile which somehow overcame all opposition, that she would like to report that in the little church where she had been a member, they had tried this double plan, and it worked like a charm."

"But," asked the Judge, "how did that reception night's vote turn out?"

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“Fine! We raised \$350.00 more last year for current expenses, and collected our full missionary budget and \$116.00 over, and didn’t keep any of it back, either, to help us raise our next year’s budget. One of the men in the church, however, suggested this plan, but do you know, our minister heard about it, and said from the pulpit that it would be a wrong thing to do this, for all we had raised up to April first was needed for the Lord’s work at once, and it should be sent, as it had been each quarter before, to the treasurers of the missionary Societies. I tell you, a new day has come in our church, for the salary of the minister has been raised to \$1,200.00 and we hope to increase it each year \$100.00 till it reaches \$1,800.00.”

Deacon Jackson saw that his friends were eagerly listening, and continued:

“But I almost forgot to tell you one thing, and perhaps the best of all, for Mrs. Oliphant, a widow in our church, has just given us a parsonage, saying she had left the house to us in her will, but had decided to give it while she lived, dividing off three rooms for herself, and letting the minister’s family live in the remaining seven. It is a fine dwelling, and easily worth \$6,000.00 with its three acres of

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land."

"Well, you are in luck," said the Judge.

"Indeed we are," continued the Deacon. "She is our only well-to-do member, and has recently given the Home and Foreign Mission Societies \$8,000.00 each for their annuity funds, and gets seven per cent. interest on it. She has about \$17,000.00 more, which she tells us she is to divide in her will between all the missionary Societies. Let me tell you, she is one noble woman, and can you believe it, that eighteen months ago she was as 'tight as the bark on a hickory limb,' and only gave our church \$30.00 a year, but not a cent to missions, except her dollar a year to each of the women's Societies. She was, however, very kind to the poor, but she was, on the whole, the closest woman I ever knew.

"She hasn't a child or a near relative, and has been a widow for thirty years. My wife says, that she told the women at the sewing circle the other day, that she had adopted all the missionary societies and the church as her children, and said that they were children, too, of whom she was very proud. She also laughingly added that the minister's wife had recently remarked to her, that she

had understood that there is no surer way of lengthening a person's life than to give to the annuity funds, and to become interested in all kinds of missionary work, and she believed that the reason that people live to be so old who give in these ways, was because they had a new peace of God in their hearts, which they had never known about before."

As the Deacon had ended his story, the two trains, which would soon separate them, were heard rumbling in the distance, and the sixth delegate, Mr. Lincoln Dodge, who had not spoken during the hour, but had listened intently to all that had been said, remarked:

"I have done some thinking while you have been speaking. Our church is without a pastor, as you know, and we give a salary of \$3,000.00. We have a score of well-to-do people, very few of whom are at all interested in missions, but I happen to be the chairman of the pulpit committee, and have heard enough to-day in the church and here at the station to want to hear more. The fact is, I have been immersed in business for thirty years, but last June, I wound up my active business life and as my boy says 'have time to burn.' "

"As most college boys have," said Doctor Jud-

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kins, a Brown man.

"Exactly," continued the speaker, "but one thing I have decided, that if I can bring it about our church will call for its next pastor a real missionary minister, and I want his wife, too, to be interested in the same subject.

"There is only a minute left before the trains get here, but I wish to make a proposition, that one week from to-day, you five men shall come to my house prepared to stay until the last train leaves the next evening. And, Deacon Jackson, I am going to send an invitation to your pastor and his wife to come also.

"My larger missionary education is just beginning, and here I am, fifty years old. But it is never too late to commence, and I have about one hundred questions to ask somebody on this subject. If possible, I am also to persuade a friend of mine from New York, who has observed widely, to visit me next week. Now, all tell me you will come and I will have my automobiles at the station to take you all out to my home, which is about four miles from the station. I shall expect you all on the morning trains that reach our city at ten o'clock."

Of course, everyone was surprised and pleased, but after a little reflection all promised to accept the invitation except Judge Comstock, who said that his court would be sitting that day, and that he feared he could not get away. He, however, consulted his calendar, and as he was stepping aboard the train, said:

“Yes, I will come too. The case which is coming up next week can be postponed until the Monday following, and I will shut down court for once in my life to accept such an invitation.”

And so they parted to meet again to talk over the work of the kingdom of God in all the earth.

The House Among the Pines

The following Thursday was one of the finest that September had brought. Mr. Dodge and his son had only twelve more days together before Richard would leave for the medical school. They were great chums, and resolved to let no hours run to waste in the time that remained.

For the last three mornings they had been called at four o'clock and turned their horses' heads toward their hunting ground seven miles to the north. This morning Bob and Dicker, their two favorite bird dogs, had been taken with them, and were much excited, running here and there, often disappearing in the woods to come in sight again, standing far ahead at some bend in the road, waiting for their masters to approach. The partridges were plentiful that morning, and after an hour's hunt they faced homeward with a good brace of birds. When the breakfast bell rang at eight o'clock, Richard and his father, with keen appetites, sat down at the table opposite Mrs. Dodge and Richard's sister Helen.

The conversation turned on the unique experience they were about to have, and Richard said he could

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not help but wonder what kind of a tribe of people his father was gathering around him.

At nine-thirty the automobiles were at the door, and Jack, the chauffeur, and Richard were soon driving them as fast as the law allowed, to meet the two trains which were to bring their guests from opposite directions at ten o'clock.

Richard Dodge was one of the finest types of a Christian college student. In spite of his father's wealth, he lived a simple life and his popularity was based on nothing but his character and general good fellowship. His father gave him a liberal allowance, but demanded a monthly cash statement of all expenditures. He was put on the salary list in the mill office and rendered his reports to the bookkeeper. At the end of his senior year it leaked out that his room-mate, whose father lost his fortune soon after the panic of 1907, had found each semester, that nearly all of his expenses had been paid by Richard, who introduced some rigid economies, and carried both sets of bills.

Richard Dodge was a student at Brown, and was exactly six feet in height. He played golf well, carried off inter-collegiate honors in tennis, rode like a cowboy, and was one of the best college

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pitchers in the country. He had not tried to make the football team, for he knew how his parents regarded the game, and after his first year did not ask to play. Indeed, the whole college had been severely shocked, for one of the students in the state, who was studying for the ministry, had so severely injured his spine in a game played on frozen ground on Thanksgiving Day in his senior year, that he was forced to leave college, return to his broken-hearted parents on the old farm, and settle down for life, with the ministry abandoned, and many years ahead of weakness and distress.

Richard also held the record of the state for the broad jump, stood second in throwing the discus and hammer, led the cross-country running, and made the hundred yard dash a fifth better than had yet been done by anyone in the University. But best of all, he was president of the Young Men's Christian Association, which he had represented four consecutive years at Northfield, where he was a great favorite.

His mother rejoiced in his athletic tendencies, but much more in his Christian manliness. He resembled her father, a Colby man, and later a frontier missionary in Nebraska, where Richard's father first

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met her, when he was sent west to regain his health.

Mr. Dodge had inherited wealth and had continued his father's business for twenty-five years, only lately disposing of it at a large profit, to English capitalists, who desired to move their plant to the United States. This greatly pleased his wife, who had noticed that her husband's health was suffering under the growing burdens of the prosperous years.

Had Richard preferred business, it would have been different. He had, however, fully decided to study medicine, and to enter the medical school the approaching October.

The family had spent the last two summers motoring in Europe, leaving New York soon after the Northfield Students' Conference, taking their French car with them. They were fortunate in securing a chauffeur who spoke French, German, Italian and English and who was a born mechanic.

It is doubtful whether a family in New England had ever been happier than these four souls.

Lincoln Dodge's wife was called the "Angel of the Mills." No case of sickness or accident was ever neglected or forgotten, and whatever her social engagements, she was constant in good deeds. In

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fact, few days passed but that a messenger went several times from the "House among the Pines" to the villages that stretched along the river, with its string of mills. And no child came to any home in these villages, without finding some little gift awaiting it from Mrs. Dodge, and often this was made by her own hands.

But Christmas was her special time of giving to every family and was a day never to be forgotten by the mill people, many of whom could speak only their own foreign language. No sooner had one Christmas gone, than the great attic was devoted to the next Christmas, and began to receive its treasures.

Wherever Mrs. Dodge went, she always was on the lookout for these Christmas gifts for the village children. Fully two thousand people always spoke of her as "The Angel," and one winter when she was taken sick, the day after Christmas, and her life was despaired of, such sorrow swept through the humble homes along the river, as was never known before. Daily bulletins, written in four languages, were placed in the post office and on the mill doors, and the villagers, who almost worshipped her, collected in scores each noon and

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evening, when the fresh bulletins were tacked up for the breathless people to read. At length, in June, when she was able to sit on the veranda, the children after school was dismissed, went every afternoon to the foot of the hill and waved their hands and threw kisses to the "Angel of the Mills."

And when after months of sickness, she was able to join again in their festivities on the Fourth of July, the enthusiasm of the people could not be restrained. Strong men cried like children to see their wives and little ones gather about Mrs. Dodge and follow her carriage wherever it went.

Richard's twin sister, Helen, was graduated the June before from Wellesley, and had been a leader in college activities. Like her brother she was fond of outdoor life, and the pleasantest summer she ever spent was in a canoeing trip which the family had taken from Moosehead Lake across the country to the Alleguash, thence to the head waters of the St. John, down which they sped with experienced guides, and returned home in their automobile. Helen was a linguist, speaking German and French from her childhood. Her one great sorrow had been the recent death of her governess in whose home in Switzerland she had resided with her mother

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the year before her college course began.

During her senior year at Wellesley, she became deeply interested in the Negro Mission Schools of the South. With her mother, she had visited Spelman Seminary in Atlanta, and had decided to become a teacher in that institution, giving her services without salary. On her return to Wellesley, a talk which she gave on Negro education at Spelman was much enjoyed by the students, and especially by the Southern girls, who said they had never heard of the school, but would certainly investigate its important work when they returned to their homes.

Mr. and Mrs. Dodge were very devoted to the religious welfare of their villages, and generously assisted the various churches. But, as the denomination to which they belonged had never established a church along the river, the family were all members in the neighboring city.

The Arrival of the Guests

Their last pastor was a brilliant man, and drew a congregation which taxed the seating capacity of the edifice. The church had increased his salary three times in six years, and many feared that they might not be able to retain his services. He was "a born preacher," but did not seem to love people. Many called him an orator, but the Dodges disliked pulpit oratory that was only sophomoric. For some reason he was deeply opposed to missions. Why this was, no one knew. It was, therefore, on the whole, a relief to the deacons of the church, and certainly to the Dodge family when he had decided to accept a call to the West at the beginning of the last summer.

Their former pastor came to them straight from the seminary, finding his way at once to the hearts of the people. He built a new \$40,000.00 church, to which Mr. Dodge contributed \$20,000.00, and had remained with them until the debt was paid.

When he left, the people had an excellent plan of weekly offerings for current expenses. They had given him a salary of \$2,000.00, and although there had been some talk of increasing it he insisted

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that until the debt was paid, it was enough, and preferred that the people should enlarge their offerings to beneficence.

When he began his pastorate the church had given \$475.00 the year before for missions, one-third of which had gone for work in the state. A simple system of weekly beneficence had gradually increased the amount until \$2,200.00 was raised during the seventh and last year of his pastorate. In his farewell discourse, he assured the people that he could not have left them for another church, but he believed it to be his duty to enter the service of the Foreign Missionary Society, as one of its secretaries.

After a year of waiting, the new pastor came, and the papers called him a "Whirlwind in Broadcloth." He removed the pulpit, preached on popular subjects, gathered in a large company of converts, who were left untrained, and who heard nothing of the great Christian enterprises which were going forward in all parts of the world. He had a mania for getting in new members.

During the second year of his pastorate, the panic of 1907 struck the community. Two banks were in trouble, business was prostrated, and in the

general discouragement, the usual canvass was not taken for missions. As a result the church soon began to live for itself only. Had Mr. and Mrs. Dodge not given through the church a portion of their previously private offerings, the shrinkage would have been much greater. The secretaries came and made the appeals, and were always entertained at the "House among the Pines."

The third year the appeals for missions were omitted, as Mr. and Mrs. Dodge were abroad; and although they sent their check to the treasurer of the church, the collection itself was not taken, as the pastor said that he thought the hard times excused the people from making the offering. Many members, however, handed their gifts privately to the collector, who was nearly heart-broken at the turn things had taken.

When, however, the minister departed, his marvelous success was widely heralded, but he left the church in a sadly weakened condition. Spiritually things were at a standstill. At this juncture, on his return from Europe, Mr. Dodge, who always studiously avoided trying to control any action of the parish, was elected chairman of the pulpit committee.

A few evenings later, his daughter had a long

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talk with her father about the experience which her room-mate's uncle had had, while his church was passing through a similar experience.

As they said good-night she exclaimed: "Father, there is only one way to bring our church back to prosperity. Yes, only one way, and that is to secure a man like our former minister to build it up by educating the converts to do Christian work, and by keeping constantly before the people the needs of the great world for which Christ died."

"Father," she said, "preaching won't do it; don't look for an orator, but for an all-round missionary minister."

This conversation had determined Mr. Dodge to attend the Association, and led to bringing together a group of congenial persons on what proved to be an eventful Thursday.

One of the trains was thirty minutes late, but by 11 o'clock both automobiles with their happy occupants, climbed the winding road to the "House among the Pines," where Mr. Dodge and his wife, the "Angel of the Mills," stood ready to welcome them. All were present but Deacon Jackson who was ill.

Their hostess at once saw the necessity of an

hour's relaxation before the conference should begin, and directed the servants to show the guests to their rooms.

In a few moments all had returned to the spacious verandas, and Mr. Dodge suggested that a stroll through the pine woods and the fields might be of interest and pass away the time pleasantly until luncheon was served.

An hour later luncheon was served in the colonial dining-room, whose windows opened on the piazza. The blessing was asked by the pastor of the church in Randolph, a genial young man who was just entering the ministry.

The time passed all too quickly, as college athletics, co-education, the future of denominational education, and state politics came in for their full share of attention.

When it was learned that Mrs. Arnold's sister, a Vassar girl, was visiting her, the Dodges had insisted that she should join the party. There were, therefore, at the table, three college students, each of whom had been graduated the June before; Miss Fessendon from Vassar, Helen from Wellesley, and Richard from Brown.

Thinking that these three would have much in

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common, Mrs. Dodge had seated them at one end of the table, where they joined in the general conversation, but found time to carry on a little talk among themselves. After the luncheon Richard said to his mother that with her consent he would invite the two college girls and Mrs. Arnold to an hour's automobile ride, but that he would promise to get them back promptly at three o'clock before the conference had proceeded far.

The Ball Begins To Roll

The Monday morning before the guests arrived Mrs. Dodge suggested to her husband that each one of the laymen, who had been invited to come to their home, should bring his pastor with him. It turned out however that of the six churches three were pastorless, but in addition to the Rev. Charles Arnold, who with his wife, the Vassar graduate, received an early invitation to join the number the day after the party separated at the Junction, the Rev. J. Franklin Dexter and Rev. Gideon Bennett accepted the invitations and were among the company that had assembled. Mr. Arnold, however, was detained at home but his arrival was expected on Friday morning.

By two o'clock the consciousness of the hopes and labors held in common had quite succeeded in breaking down the reserve that some had earlier felt.

Mr. Dodge certainly was a skillful master of ceremonies and a born leader of men. When therefore the little company assembled in the drawing-room, he simply suggested that each should speak concerning the missionary work in his church, re-

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marking that all of the addresses would, of course, be very informal.

Turning to the Judge, Mr. Dodge continued: "What do you think of my suggestion?"

"It is a capital one. All we need is to set the subject rolling and it will gather size like a snow-ball down a hill."

And then he remarked, "It is evident, that we have several kinds of churches represented here, and the probability is these churches are facing various situations and employ different methods of work in bringing about the larger missionary ends. If Mr. Dodge would welcome a suggestion, it would be that Pastor Dexter and his Deacon should tell about the situation in their church in Randolph."

"Yes, gladly."

But Mr. Dexter hastened to explain that he had been with the church less than a year and requested the Deacon to speak first, saying that he would throw in a few words occasionally if they were necessary.

Deacon Edwards hesitated a moment but replied: "Very well, I hadn't expected to say much to-day and my words will be very few for I 'aint much on talking and there really 'aint much of any

inclination to raise in our church the missionary money that the budget suggests. We have only ninety-one resident members and nearly all of them work in the mills and shoe-shops. The one great reason however, why we do not raise more money for all the missionary objects, is because our church is a missionary church itself and receives \$250.00 a year from the state Convention."

Then he continued: "We have had this \$250.00 a year for about eight years and we are apportioned \$32.00 a year for the convention work. We have to send the missionary money each year before we get our final check for \$62.50.

"This last year we really 'aint raised any money at all for the Convention, as the treasurer advanced what was in the treasury and sent it to the convention treasurer, so we're only going to have \$218.00 new money this year."

"But are not you asked to give toward the budget," inquired Mr. Dodge.

"Yes," replied the Deacon. "Only a few days ago we were apportioned \$28.00 for foreign missions, \$21.00 for home missions and \$4.00 for the publication work.

"Last year however we only gave \$14.00 for all

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missionary objects outside of the money we sent to the Convention, and some of the members thought that as we were aided with missionary money we had no right to send even that \$14.00. I must say that I am a little mixed in my mind about the matter. for both the women's societies in our church raise their apportionment and the last year the woman's home society sent \$15.00 more than the sum it was asked to give."

"Well," said Mr. Dodge, "I can see clearly how that raises a great question, and it must touch many churches in our state, for I understand that more than a third of them last year received convention aid, running anywhere from \$400.00 down to \$75.00."

"There is no doubt," said the Deacon, "it's a puzzle and a half, and I hope soon to find how to solve it."

The Judge Delivers An Opinion

"Yes," said the Judge, "it is a fundamental question, but it is easily answered. I have been a member of the board of our state Convention for twenty-eight years. It took me a while to get my bearings, yet I have never had but one opinion since I did, and everything I have observed has turned that opinion into a conviction.

"Why should the Convention apportion a certain amount to some churches, while the other missionary Societies are discouraged from doing so? Every church has a world-wide obligation. The same Christ died for us all and told us all to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Every Christian ought to give for the conversion of the world, even if he does happen to be a member of a little church.

"Why! I have a brother who is one of the board of managers of the Home Mission Society, and while talking with him last summer on this very point, he said that they believed that every church that received missionary money should give according to its ability to the great missionary causes, and that it had always pressed this matter very hard.

THE JUDGE DELIVERS AN OPINION

It does so for it believes that every mission church should strive to raise the missionary budget apporportioned to it.

“My brother also said that long ago the Society discovered that the financial and spiritual prosperity of a mission church kept pace with its missionary zeal and generosity, and that the surest way to get a mission church to become self-supporting was to have it increase its offerings to all the missionary Societies.

“And now let me tell you the result of my careful observation. In this state nine churches have given up convention aid in twenty-four years. Two of these did so because the population increased. The other seven discontinued their requests for assistance because in each instance a new minister with a missionary vision persuaded his people to give for outside objects and after a little, each of these churches found that it could continue to give for the spread of the gospel in all the world. In their habits of giving to others they also discovered that they could raise an increased amount for their own current expenses and let the money they had themselves received go to other churches that really needed it. My opinion is that a church is not a real church, that

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does not obey the last words of our Lord, which we call 'The Great Commission.' ”

Help in Time of Need

"Why, you can hardly believe what I am now going to tell you," continued the Judge. "Listen! A young pastor, just out of the seminary, was my guest at the Association ten years ago when it met with our church. I pass my vacation in the town where he preached, and know all the people I shall name. He was pastor of a church which gave him a salary of \$800.00, and \$200.00 of this amount was furnished by the Convention. After being with his people three months he learned by accident that some of the prosperous farmers, two of whom were his deacons, were only giving \$12.00 a year each to the church and that seven others, who had a monthly milk check of over \$100.00 were giving less than \$10.00 annually. The deacons told him that their Convention unlike most of the conventions in the country had a large fund and they ought to have their part of its income. Well, the young man waited for one year, kept his eyes and ears open and got his roots down deeply into the soil of their stony hearts.

"But one pleasant Sunday morning in October, when every one was at church, he preached a ser-

mon on 'Self Support' that greatly offended the leading men of his church. It happened, however, that a former member, but who was a stranger to the young minister, had come home the day before to visit his widowed mother. He was a superintendent of schools somewhere in New York, and seeing the impression produced by the sermon, which he greatly enjoyed, felt that it was imperative that he should say something to break the spell that he knew had fallen upon the people.

"Probably no more popular boy ever went out of that community to make his way in the world, and the visitor felt sure of his ground. After the hymn was sung and just before the benediction was pronounced the young man, whose name was Wilson, arose and said:

" 'I don't come home very often now to attend church and I have a few remarks that I would like to make before the congregation is dismissed.'

"Everyone was standing, waiting for the benediction, but the minister asked the people to be seated while the brother spoke.

"Widow Wilson's son then continued: 'I must go away to-morrow morning very early, and may not be at the meeting to-night as I want to be with

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mother as much as possible. I feel, however, very strongly inclined to say a few words about the sermon of the morning, and I want to tell you my friends, that I agree with every word that the minister has said. This is a rich farming town, and if necessary two members of this church can be found,—and you won't have to go out of this room to do so,—who can give \$100.00 a year and not miss the money at all, and I believe also that there are ten others who could give \$50.00 a year, if they had it in their hearts to do so.

“I must say, that I have been trying to find out, how this church five years ago, fell from grace far enough to ask the Convention for aid. Why, do you know, brethren, that the man who gave so much money to your Convention never intended that a church like yours should have a dollar of it. You are not a poor church. Nearly every farmer in this town has money in the bank, and I understand that there are but four farms that are mortgaged.

“My friends, that man, who was so generous to our Convention, gave his money for the churches whose members were poor, or for struggling interests, and every dollar that you get is needed to take the gospel to the destitute parts of the state and to help

in Christianizing the thousands of foreigners who are pouring into your mill towns, and indeed are settling on many of the deserted farms not far from here.

“ ‘Why, do you know that our Home Mission Board is trying now to persuade your Convention to spend more money on home mission work in this state, and offers to give dollar for dollar toward the salaries of missionaries to the French, Italian, Swedes and all the other foreign communities that we find springing up on every side.’

“ ‘When the widow’s son said these last words he looked straight at Deacon Smith, who was the strongest layman in the church, and continued: ‘Last night, Deacon Smith, I looked up the old association reports, that mother keeps, and found that during the five years, ever since you’ve been on the Convention, this church has been giving less and less in the annual collections for home and foreign missions, and that you have had your aid increased twice in that time. I must say, my dear old neighbors, that for once in my life, I am ashamed of the old church here on the hill. I am not a member any more, but my heart is here, and I have a proposition to make. Listen! I will give \$50.00

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to this church for three years, if you will vote to-day to take no more convention money.

“ ‘Probably some of you may think that the minister and I have put our heads together, but I have never seen your pastor until to-day. The last two times I was here he was not in his pulpit; once he was sick and the other time he was called away by the sickness of his father. But I mean to grasp his hand in a minute and thank him for the noble sermon he preached this morning.

“ ‘My dear old neighbors, I will tell you one thing, that your pastor is a man of courage and vision and that he won't be allowed to stay here long, if you don't look out, for I was asked only last week by the pulpit committee of a church in New York what I knew about him, and I said, “I know a good deal about him. But I want you to keep your hands off the young man. Let him stay up there in the country for a good long pastorate, for the sinners are plentiful in the town where he lives and some of the saints up there have terribly backslidden during the last few years.” ’

“As he said this, a smile played over his face, and Deacon Smith said right out in meeting, ‘John, you are the same boy you used to be, and are just

like your father.'

" 'Well, Deacon,' said John Wilson, 'If I am like my father, I take after a good man, but if my father knew that this church had gone onto the Convention, I believe he would turn over in his grave up there under the pines. '

" 'Oh, my friends, it all comes back to me now, that last summer before I went to college, when I worked in the fields with Deacon Smith and his son Frank. I never shall forget how my heart ached when I learned that Frank had died. It was really my first great sorrow.'

" 'Then he hesitated for a moment and continued: 'I have a tender place in my heart for this dear old church and every member of it.

" 'Why here it was that I was converted and went forward for prayers and knelt down right there by the end of that front pew, and I remember that Deacon Smith came and the minister and my dear father and mother, and all knelt down with me and prayed that I might grow up to be a strong Christian man. When we got up from that prayer, I felt the peace of God come into my heart, and I started straight for the horse sheds to find Frank Smith, and he was converted that night.

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“‘But I am getting away from my point, my friends. I am really pained to note that while the farms have been growing in value, the gifts to the church and missions have declined.’ ”

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"After waiting a moment, and concluding that no one else desired to speak, the pastor rose to pronounce the benediction, feeling satisfied that the suggestion was not to be acted on. The congregation had sat in breathless silence, and everyone distinctly heard the old clock behind the preacher tick, as if in holy admonition.

"The pastor lifted his hand to say the words, but Deacon Smith leaped to his feet and said very slowly:

" 'What John Wilson tells us is true. How well I remember how John dropped seed corn that summer while my dear boy and I covered, and now he has returned to drop the seed of Christian truth into the furrow that our faithful minister has ploughed through the fallow ground of our hearts.

'Our church indeed is in a sad condition. We have had no baptisms for four years, while during that time eight members have died and five have sent for their letters. I remember what John has said about his conversion and the picture he has called up is one of the most precious memories of my life. I never shall for a moment forget how

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my boy Frank came home that Sunday afternoon and told his mother and me that he intended also to give his heart to Christ. Well those were happy days. We've been pretty lonely down in my house during the last twelve years, since the boy went away.

"He paused a moment, but then continued. 'And on the whole I am utterly ashamed, brethren and sisters, of my sordid, careless, stingy life. I hope God will forgive me and I want this church to forgive me for being such a poor deacon.'" He waited an instant and added with a broken voice, "I hope to be a better Christian man from this day on.'"

"By this time, Angela Packard, the finest woman in the church, whose husband was the other deacon, and who had always opposed the taking of the convention money, bowed her head on the pew in front and sobbed aloud. Again after a period of silence in which the old clock seemed to tick louder and louder, Deacon Smith still struggling to control his emotions, continued:

" 'Yes, brothers and sisters, I am ashamed of the amount which I give and I will match John's gift, yes, and give more than that, if it is needed to take

this church off the Convention."

"Then the deacon sat down, bowed his head on the pew in front, and groaned as if his heart would break. No one had seen him show such emotion since the day of Frank's funeral.

"At once Deacon Packard arose and said: "I am ashamed of my subscription too. When I was a boy I used to race with Deacon Smith and we generally ran neck and neck. I will match his gift of fifty and give as much as he gives up to a hundred."

"By this time the ice was thoroughly broken, and before the meeting was over fourteen others promised to raise their subscriptions to \$25.00, some of whom had been giving much smaller amounts.

"Still others increased their gifts until over \$400.00 additional was subscribed. By this time Deacon Smith had dried his tears and was sitting straight up keeping count of the increased subscriptions. Suddenly he leaped to his feet again and said: 'Counting in a hundred each for Deacon Packard and me we have all promised to give this morning surely \$450.00 for the current expenses of this church more than we raised last year and this is \$250.00 more than the convention money. I move

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that we send back this quarter's check for \$50.00 which has just come from the treasurer of the Convention, and add \$250.00 to the pastor's salary, for we all know that he is to be married next week and will need all this and more too.' Deacon Packard seconded the motion and without discussion it was unanimously passed."

"Then Auntie Turner, an aged widow of the church, who spoke with a trembling voice, and whose husband for thirty years was a deacon but who had died long before, raised herself slowly on her cane and said:

" 'Beloved, this is a day of days for this church. How mean we have all been with our Lord, but I want to say that I feel it in my heart of hearts that we are near a great blessing and that God is to let the gentle dew of His grace fall upon our church until He has refreshed every shrivelled soul.

" 'This dear boy, who is visiting his sweet mother for the Sabbath, will always be a boy to me, for I held him many hours at a time in my lap when his mother was sick with diphtheria the winter after he was born. I thank God that he put it into John's heart to come home just at this time and see his mother, but I think that this meeting ought not

to break up before he tells us the best way to raise money for missions, also. Only about three weeks ago, I understand the clerk received our apportionment, and I am sure that we shall lose the blessing of the Lord that is so near us, if we don't open our hearts to-day to the great cause for which Christ died."

"John Wilson replied that his only suggestion was that they should send to the "Mission Boards" to learn about the duplex envelope system and have a committee canvass the church for pledges, urging every member and even the children, who would be members of it sometime, to all give each week.

" 'Even if the children only give one cent a week it will teach them to give more later. It will be,' he continued, 'a very simple matter for you to divide it all up according to the percentages in the budget, and you will probably raise a great deal more than you are asked by the apportionment committee of your state if you are as generous to missions as you have been to your church during the last hour.' "

" 'Well,' said Deacon Smith, 'we might as well do it all up in one day.' The vote was carried and the pastor was asked to name a committee of

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three to make a canvass during the next week.

“The minister had remained during all this time an eager and surprised listener and was amazed at the direction things had taken, for he had noticed the sullen looks of the men before him all during the delivery of his sermon.

“After the last vote was passed he said: “Now brethren and sisters, your kindness to me and to her who will soon be with you all is greatly appreciated, and my only desire is to be your faithful pastor as long as God shall make it clear to me that it is my duty and privilege.

“ ‘I know, too, that we all feel very grateful that the Lord has sent our brother to us at this time. This dear church sent him forth into the great world and God has blessed him and given him a place of honor where he exerts a wonderful influence in educational and Christian circles. But during these years he has not forgotten to give God the glory of it all. I am forcibly reminded of the words, which seem to find their perfect illustration in what this church has done for our friend and what he has done for the church. The verse is this: ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.’

“ ‘I wish our brother would lead in prayer before we go, and I hope he can come to the evening service. Certainly we will all make a special effort to have the church filled with his old friends, who will be glad to hear him speak once more.’ ”

“Of course John Wilson could not refuse such an invitation for the evening, and as he rose he said, ‘Let us all kneel down once more, just as we used to during that revival, when in my boyhood, I became a Christian.’ ”

“The congregation fell on their knees—even eight or ten who were not members of the church—and as the layman prayed, the tender memories of the past swept over the worshippers and the forms of loved ones, long since in heaven seemed to be bowing again by their sides. The prayer was tender, fervid, child like, and never to be forgotten.

“At its conclusion, the minister with a voice suffused with emotion pronounced the benediction taken from the twentieth verse of the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews:

“ ‘Now the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work,

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to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, though Jesus Christ to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.' ”

“As the people slowly rose from their knees, Adam Moses, whose wife had been praying for him for more than thirty years, said with quivering lips, ‘My neighbors, I never expected to live to feel the power of religion as I’ve felt it to-day. I have just given my life to God.’ ”

“Everyone was astonished, Adam Moses converted! It was the first conversion that had occurred in over four years, and the words sent a thrill through all the congregation. At once the people instinctively gathered around the new convert, who was one of the best men in town and a member of the legislature.

“ ‘He said: ‘Brethren and sisters, I have always been a Nicodemus, but I am going to walk with John, the beloved disciple, hereafter and keep as near the Saviour as I can.’ ”

“Then Angela Packard with a trembling voice started a hymn and as the congregation went out singing “Blest be the tie that binds,” old Auntie Turner said to Mrs. Smith as she passed her at the door, Mary Smith, just as sure as I hear the wind

blowing through those elms yonder, I can hear 'the sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees.' We are going to have a great revival in this town."

"Well," said the Judge, "they had one and it began that night. The house was crowded, and when the widow's son spoke on 'How to Become a Christian,' eighteen of his old friends and neighbors asked for prayers and a widespread religious interest began that swept over that town. The wonderful part of it, however, was that the pastors and the members of other churches from miles away, came and carried home the fire to their own parishes. Yes, it was one of the greatest revivals that ever took place in the state. That was ten years ago, and the church has grown to be one of the strongest and leads all in missionary gifts per member."

When the Judge ceased to speak, everyone felt that the question whether one kind of a convention church should give money for world-wide missions was answered.

"Why," exclaimed Mrs. Dodge, "that is one of the most thrilling stories of church life that I have ever heard."

Then the pastor, whose church had been described by the Deacon before the Judge delivered

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his opinion, said, "Well, our church isn't in a rich farming community, but nearly every member is a wage-earner and has steady work. I believe, Deacon, that if you and I go home and work together for a month we can start new methods of raising money and get our church off the Convention before the last of October and have our budget pledged too."

"Well," said the Deacon. "I have seen daylight to-day; here's my hand, pastor, and I believe we can surely get it done long before snow flies. We also need a revival powerful bad, and perhaps this will be God's way to give it to us."

Mr. Dodge said: "Has anyone anything more to add about the convention church?"

"Yes," replied the Judge, "I have one word more to say. The secretaries of our Conventions, who are one of the best groups of men in the world, know the truth of what I have remarked, and I am glad to say, as a rule believe that churches that are themselves aided should give to all missionary objects. Some of them I fear tremble a little, believing that state missions will suffer if all the churches give more and more to missions outside of the state. I met one of them the other day at the Laymen's

Conference, and I said to him, 'Don't worry, Doctor; the human heart is a unit and as men and women learn to give to foreign missions and home missions and for publication work and to the women's societies, to theological education, ministerial relief and to everything else, they will give more to state missions.' "

"What did he answer?" asked Mr. Dodge.

" 'Why,' he said, 'I have no doubt that it will prove so in the end, and that the rank and file of our churches are now simply playing with giving.' "

And the Judge continued, "I told him, yes, but they'll learn to play the game hard by-and-by, the way a state secretary has recently done, who has had one of the representatives of each of the missionary societies carrying a state-wide campaign through the one hundred or more churches in his state and the watchword was 'The whole budget and baptisms in every church in the state.' "

At this moment Roger, the big St. Bernard dog bounded onto the piazza, came to the low window, and looked appealingly at his master. When the door was opened a package was untied from his neck, and the tired dog, thoroughly exhausted, stretched out on a rug.

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It proved to be a two-pound box of chocolates, which contained this note from Richard: "We have had hard luck near the drug store in the village of Jackson and I fear we cannot get home until four o'clock. After I had been at work about half an hour with what proved to be a hard break in a front tire, up came Roger, who had been trailing on behind, without our knowing it. The poor fellow was about out of breath. I have fed him chocolates and told him to return home with this box. I believe he will obey. When he arrives give the old dear some more chocolates. Don't expect us until you see us for I have decided to put on a new tire."

Roger seemed to understand the letter, for as Mr. Dodge put it in his pocket, he leaped to his feet looking expectantly for the promised candy.

The dog received the first in the box and after it was passed among the guests Mr. Dodge said, "Perhaps we shall hear more about the convention church matter, for Deacon Jones tells me that another deacon and his pastor may have something to say on this subject."

"Yes," said the pastor, "I fear we are not all as faithful as this dog, who did not stop on the

road to eat the chocolates and keep them for himself, for the Lord has granted to all Christians many gracious gifts and commanded them to return to their homes and to their friends and to distribute them to their neighbors, and to all the world. They could certainly learn a lesson from this faithful Roger, for they have not obeyed the voice of their Master, but have kept the sweet things all for themselves."

A Look Into the Long Future

It was an ideal afternoon for an automobile ride. Mrs. Arnold was glad to chaperone the party, for it had been a keen disappointment to her when her husband had been detained at home by unexpected pastoral duties, and in spite of all her will power, one of her occasional nervous headaches was giving her the first warnings of what she feared would be a day of severe pain.

Richard drove the automobile, and Miss Fessendon sat by his side. The conversation ran along in a very animated manner, at first being general, but soon the two occupants of the front seat were absorbed in the description of the European tour which the Dodge family had recently completed.

Suddenly realizing that he was monopolizing the conversation, Richard stopped and said:

"But European trips, Miss Fessendon, are so common that I fear I have annoyed you with my descriptions."

"Not at all," was the reply. "What you have said reminds me of some sights which I have seen from the window of my room in New York City during the last four summers."

"You don't mean to say," interrupted the astonished young man, "that you have spent the last four summers in that hot town?"

"Yes, indeed, and in the very center of one of the foreign communities also; for I have been training as a nurse twelve weeks each year during my college course, and the hospital where I lived is located in the very heart of the Italian colony."

"Do I understand that you are expecting to be a nurse?"

"No, not exactly that," was the reply. "But incidentally I have been trying to learn all I can about nursing, so that when the time should come for me to go to the medical school, I might have such general information as would stand me in good stead when I go to China to enter upon my life work as a medical missionary."

"Great Scott!" came the reply. "To China as a medical missionary! Whoever put that into your head?"

After a moment's hesitation, in which a silent prayer was lifted to heaven that her answer might be discreet and effective, she said:

"In my last year in the high school, soon after my conversion, I decided to become a physician if

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the way were opened. It seemed at that time, as if every door to a college education were closed, but unexpectedly the college course was made possible, and during my Freshman year at Vassar, after a missionary had spoken in the chapel, I returned to my room and began a very careful study of China. My investigations continued all that winter during every spare moment that I had from my studies and daily exercise. In the early spring I came to the conclusion that China presented the greatest opportunity to practice medicine. The result is that I consecrated myself instantly to medical work in that great Empire. Answering your question briefly, I may say that a medical missionary and a long array of facts put the idea into my mind, but that our Lord Himself, I believe, put it into my heart to go to China."

"Well," said the astonished driver, "I begin my medical studies next fall also, but China is the last place I should think of practicing medicine."

"But if China does not offer the attractions you are looking for, perhaps Japan, India or Africa would furnish you sufficient scope for your medical skill."

"Quite likely," said Richard, as he broke into a

laugh. "I fancy there is much suffering everywhere." And then, fearing he had been rude, he said with tenderness, "I would be the last person in the world, Miss Fessendon, to speak lightly of the noble self-sacrifice that you and many others are facing."

"But," replied the Vassar girl, "it is not a question of self-sacrifice: it is a question of obedience to what I believe to be the call of Christ in serving the largest number of needy women that I can with this one life of mine."

This was a new thought to Richard Dodge, and he instantly felt the influence of the young woman by his side. A moment later as the car began slowly to climb a steep hill, he glanced intuitively to scan her face more intently than he had yet done. She met his gaze without flinching, and he felt his soul tremble as it had never trembled before. The machine swerved, but he righted it instantly and lapsed into silence, and beyond the horizon at the top of the hill he had a long look into the future. Suddenly a fox chased by two dogs ran across the road; Miss Fessendon gave a cry of surprise and the spell was broken.

A few moments later they had reached a village

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five miles from their home, when an explosion like the report of a pistol told them that one of the tires had burst. While Richard was making the repairs, Roger, the big St. Bernard dog, as we have already heard, rushed up out of breath, and joined his friends whom he had followed far in the rear. Forty minutes later, after Roger had been sent home with a package of chocolates tied around his neck, they started back by another road. They had not gone, however, beyond the limits of the village when a puncture in a front wheel held them up for twenty minutes more.

At last at great speed, Richard drove his merry companions home, and as they flew past the birches, tinged with the first frost of the fall, and bunches of golden rod nodding their greetings, his sister called out that his pace was dangerous.

"But what of my promise to mother to get you back in an hour? I reckon that Roger returned about fifteen minutes after the hour elapsed, and we must certainly be home at four o'clock."

And he did not speak another word until he came within sight of the "House among the Pines." But all during that homeward ride he saw the ambitious dream of the last four years fade away, and realized

that the fascinating girl by his side was every moment, by an influence of which she was evidently entirely unconscious, changing him and all of his plans.

When the car stopped, Mrs. Arnold and Helen went on ahead to the piazza, but Miss Fessendon waited a moment while Richard ran the machine under cover.

As they started across the lawn toward the house, the Brown man said with a bit of hesitation which he unwittingly betrayed:

"You are to study in Philadelphia next year, and I shall be in Baltimore. What you have said about China has interested me very much. I shall be very happy to run my car over to Philadelphia occasionally and see how your work is progressing."

As Miss Fessendon was about to reply the words died on her lips, for at that instant her ankle turned as she stepped into the winding path, and she fell to the lawn in great pain. Seeing that she had fainted, Richard called for assistance, and a few minutes later Miss Fessendon, who had quickly recovered consciousness, was sitting propped up on a couch, in her room.

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Dr. Judkins volunteered his services and an examination showed that the ankle was sprained, and that it must have perfect quiet for a day at least and probably longer.

"Well, my dear," Helen said, "it is all right some way, and the redeeming feature of it all is that you have to stay here for a day or so longer, the doctor says, and during that time what good friends we will become."

Miss Fessendon replied, "How good of you to say that, and I shall so much enjoy this unexpected pleasure of being with you and your mother during my days of enforced imprisonment, for I could not wish to have a lovelier prison house. My only regret is that I shall lose my visit with my dear sister."

"Ah," Mrs. Dodge said as she entered the room, "but we must have your sister stay with you if her husband will give her up for a week. I judge she herself is over-tired, as the doctor tells us you are, and Mr. Dodge is going to telephone to her husband, who I think must be home from the funeral by this time, to see if the arrangement is satisfactory, and to urge him also to come up surely on the morning train and pass as much time with us as he can. We have just been disappointed in

our pulpit supply and believe that we can arrange to have a professor in the Seminary take his pulpit for next Sunday."

The young patient, whose pain had now ceased under the skillful treatment of the doctor, was lifted into an invalid's chair, and Richard, being summoned by his sister, wheeled her down to join the conference which had been interrupted by the accident.

As the session was beginning once more, Mr. Roberts, the speaker at the evening session, finding it possible to leave on an earlier train than he had planned, surprised all by his arrival.

How Shaking Hands Diminished the Congregation

After introducing Mr. Roberts to each guest, Mr. Dodge explained to his friend the several subjects which had been covered by the speakers, and said that they were about to hear from the Rev. Gideon Bennett, who would speak concerning recent developments in his church.

The Minister, however, replied to his host, "As I think it over, Mr. Dodge, I really must ask to be excused, for I see clearly that this is a laymen's meeting. I am enjoying myself immensely, and my note book is full of many valuable suggestions. It seems to me, however, that my Deacon, who was born and brought up in the town where our church is located, can tell the story better than I can. Indeed, what has been accomplished has been very largely because he has stood by me faithfully in many trying experiences. How many times I have heard him say to me, 'Pastor, don't mind what they say, you know you are right, therefore go ahead.' "

"Well," said the Deacon, "perhaps it would be better for me to tell about it, for my pastor wouldn't give you more than half of what ought to

be said."

"Be careful now, Deacon," said the Pastor, "don't add any tassels to the story."

Mr. Roberts broke into a laugh at this reference to the tassels and the Deacon replied:

"Don't worry Pastor, for the barrel that I am going to open has the same kind of apples at the bottom as it has at the top."

This was indeed a very felicitous introduction, for the Pastor said;

"And I can certify to the fact that the deacons in our church get the highest prices for their apples in the New York market of any that are sent from our town."

"Well," replied the Deacon, "I will tell only the truth all of which these people ought to have."

Then he took a long breath, and said, "I really don't know where to begin, for there is nothing the same as it used to be in our town, except the natural scenery. We were all discouraged and everything was running to tailings for many years.

"If the two ministers will pardon me, I will say that we had a pastor who stayed with us for more than seven years and he was one of the best

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men who ever wore a white tie, but the trouble was he never wore any other kind and sometimes that didn't stay white. Then, too, he wasn't a good mixer, and he was high and mighty in his manners and very careless in his dress.

"When he shook hands the women used to cringe, but he never seemed to notice when they winced. I myself have a pretty good grip, but I've had my fingers ache for an hour after meeting him at the church door.

"Do you know, I believe that awful vise-like grip cut our congregation down one-third, for he had a way of reaching the door first and few ever got by without getting that fearful squeezing."

"Yes," resumed the Deacon, "and when he shook your hand he jerked it up and down as if he had hold of a pump-handle, but some Sundays he shook hands with a side motion in a way that was very laughable and people used to say, after the benediction, as they were passing down toward the front door, 'Do you suppose it will be up and down to-day, or sideways?'"

Mr. Roberts at this moment caught Mr. Dodge's eye and both led the general merrimen again.

"Well, after a while he resigned and went to

farming and I understand has recently taken a pastorate again.

"He was a very earnest preacher, but he spoke so loud that most of the time you couldn't hear what he said, and then every once in a while he would drop to a whisper and talk so low that you could simply see his mouth go."

"Yes, yes," said Doctor Judkins, "and that is an awful fault in a preacher," as he laughed heartily.

"But we got used to that after four or five years," said the Deacon, "and we had about a dozen deaf people in our church, and he was a very popular preacher with them, for when he shouted, they got a part of it, and when he whispered, the lip readers got the rest.

"The worst thing about this good man was, however, that he seemed to care no more for missions than he did for the sea gulls, and my wife said to me one day, that she really believed that Mrs. Waterbury must have had some such man as our elder in mind, when she told of the man, who didn't know the difference between a Telugu and a telephone.

"After the minister preached his farewell sermon,

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a paper in a neighboring town had a wonderful account of it. The last words which the writer had sent, were these: 'Without doubt Brother Dearborn's last year was the crowning year in the history of the church.' The editor, however, was a born wag, and he left one letter out in the word crowning, so that it read, 'Without doubt the last year was the crowing year in the history of the church.'

"Well, listen my friends, it is a long road that doesn't have a turn, and when our new minister came, the finances for several years had been pulling very hard, and we were getting at last \$175.00 assistance from the Convention.

"The first thing our new pastor, who is here with us to-day, God bless him! said to our committee, was that it was his ambition to have the church free from the Convention within three years. Some of our members you know had heard about the large amount of money that the Convention had left to it, and wanted to get some of it as well as some of the other churches about which they learned at the meetings of the Association.

"Well, the first spring after our minister came, he began to talk about repairing the church. He

said they all knew he didn't have any money, but he offered to give \$100.00 in labor, by working at least one day a week. It appears that he had learned the carpenter's trade before he became a minister, and so we knew that offer meant a good deal. Others promised work, lumber and money.

"We first built our horse sheds with sliding doors, so that the horses would not freeze the next winter while the saints sat in the warm church; but to make a long story short, in nine months we had collected in work and money \$1,700.00, and our church looked as slick as a whistle. The outsiders that had never paid much attention to us began to come in and the congregation grew; slowly, but surely. The new minister, too, knows how to shake hands right, and we can hear him when he preaches.

"On the first Sunday in September the pastor said, without consulting any of us, 'Brethren and sisters, I believe our church can drop \$50.00 of the help of the Convention this year.' And do you know, we voted to do it that day and the next September we voted to drop fifty more and the third September \$75.00 that was left wasn't asked for.

"But the missionary end of it was the best of

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all. Under the inspiration of our new minister, who was working with his hands as well as with his head and heart, we began a weekly envelope system for current expenses, made the pews free, after it was discussed in at least a half dozen adjourned church meetings, and canvassed the people for weekly collections for missions also.

"The response was wonderful. Everybody seemed to help and we have increased the amounts each year since then. That was three years ago, and the first year we raised \$130.00, the second year \$160.00 for all missions; last year we increased our pastor's salary \$100.00, and added \$40.00 to the missionary funds bringing them up to \$200.00.

"Our minister now also preaches in another church four miles away that used to pay \$500.00 and parsonage. When they asked him if he would preach for them, he said, 'Yes, if my church is willing and on one other condition, and that is that you will give up the \$200.00 convention money that you have.'

"The plan has been working a year and that church has sold the parsonage and put the money in a bank as a fund to care for poor people.

“Our pastor also introduced into that other church the same plan for missions, and last year they raised \$78.00 and expect to get up to \$100.00 next year. Our minister came to us at \$600.00 and parsonage, and now he gets from both churches \$1,000.00 and parsonage, and it is one of the best charges in the state.

“We have no rich people in our town and there is not one person in either church worth more than \$5,000.00 and many of them haven’t their farms paid for yet.

“The funny part was that during all that time, when both churches thought they were so poor that they must have convention help, the sisters in both parishes for over twenty years had their home and foreign mission circles and sometimes in each church they raised as high as \$20.00 and once over \$30.00 for each of their societies.”

With these words the deacon concluded, and Mr. Dodge inquired if anyone had any questions to ask or remarks to offer.

The Trees on Mount Zion

Mrs. Arnold replied, "One thing seems very certain, that if in these little churches that get convention aid, the women didn't train the children in the mission circles, and teach them to give their cents to missions, we would have a hard time obtaining gifts, when they grow up to be men and women, and come from the country into our city churches, where so many of them gravitate. Then, too, we must not forget that the life of the women in the country churches is very much broadened by their missionary reading and studies. I have often said that more farmers' wives would be in the insane asylums if they didn't have the missionary magazines and books to brighten them up. I have strong hopes that the Laymen's Movement will wake the men up, as the women have been awakened ever since I can remember.

"One of the things that has surprised me, is how patiently the women have labored and given to keep the cause of missions alive, while their husbands and brothers have set back and said with a wise shake of the head, 'Yes, certainly, it stands to reason, we ought not to give to missions when

we get mission money.'

"At Vassar, I had a college chum who came from one of these churches that receives financial help, and one fall when her father, who was the church solicitor, was sick, she took the subscription paper. She told me that she had really never recovered from the shock of that fortnight's work; for the excuses people made, and the false things they told her made such an impression that she almost lost her hope and faith.

"When she reported it to her father, he said, 'Mary, it was wrong in me to ask you, and you shall never do it again. It is certainly casting pearls before swine for you to go to some of the people to whom I sent you. I will do it myself hereafter, if I have to crawl along with a cane.'

"Mary said, 'Well father, perhaps it would do them good if you used the cane over some of them.'

"'Yes,' said her father laughingly, 'but they don't dare to tell me such things, for I know what taxes they pay and what their milk checks are, and how many potatoes they sold last year, and how much lumber and wood they have carried to market.'

"But Mary, my roommate, was not satisfied, and

THE TREES ON MOUNT ZION

asked:

“ ‘Father, how can you explain such stories as they told me, and pretty good people too said those things to me,’

“Of course, I asked Mary what her father replied, and she said:

“ ‘I shall never forget it and the look on his face as long as I live, as he whispered in my ear, “My dear, sweet child, I don’t know how to explain it, and perhaps it can never be explained, but it is very evident to me that the Lord allows a good many crooked trees to grow on Mount Zion.” ’

Just then the old clock struck six and the afternoon conference ended. A half hour later all were seated at the table where Mrs. Arnold and Mr. Roberts held a conversation, which all enjoyed, about foreign mission work in New York City, and the problems that grow out of immigration.

Mr. Roberts, who had been one of the deputation to China, also spoke of the wonderful missionary prospects in that vast empire.

At length, after the last course had been served, Mr. Dodge said: “I observe that every American

problem is a home mission problem, and that every Asiatic problem is a foreign mission problem."

"Yes," said Mr. Roberts, "that is strictly true."

Mr. Dodge replied, "Well, all of these things simply whet our appetite to hear what Doctor Judkins has to say to us this evening." And then turning to his guests, as they rose from the table, he said:

"After a little interval, in which we will gather around the piano, we are to be favored with a half hour's talk from Dr. Judkins, who is to tell us something, that will, I am sure, interest us all very much.

"After that, Mr. Roberts has promised to speak or read for an hour or more, and then to stand in the question box, if the time allows."

The piano was so surrounded by the happy company, and as Helen took her position at the instrument, Mrs. Dodge said:

"I have asked my daughter and son to sing; we should have expected Miss Fessendon to favor us, had she not had her little accident this afternoon."

As they were approaching, Mrs. Arnold said:

"How lovely this is! We shall so much enjoy the singing."

THE TREES ON MOUNT ZION

Then Richard, with a rich tenor voice sang "The Holy City." It was greatly appreciated, and was followed by his father's favorite, "The Birthday of the King."

After two other selections, in which his sister joined him in charming duets, the company adjourned to the drawing-room for the evening conference.

At that moment Mr. Dodge was called to the telephone room, and as his wife was interested in the message, he sent for her to join him. It proved to be a long-distance call from Chicago, announcing that the piece of land which had been inherited from Mr. Dodge's father, and which had been condemned for city purposes, had been valued by the arbitration committee at \$460,000.

"Why, my dear," said Mrs. Dodge, "isn't that much more than you expected to get for it?"

"Well, one can never tell," was the reply, "what such awards will be. However, I guess we will find a good use for it in view of what we are hearing to-day."

"By the way, beloved," said Mrs. Dodge, "we must not remain away from our guests too long, but do you remember twenty-eight years ago this

very day, when we first met at the sewing circle, when I was visiting my Aunt Hannah?"

"Do I," he replied. "Can I ever forget it, and how my heart trembled that afternoon, as I obtained my first full view of you standing in the porch and looking at the canary bird."

"Well, my dear," she replied, "if I know our son at all, he is passing through the same experience today that -you passed through then."

"What!" he said. "Why, I have been so absorbed with others that I have not noticed the boy at all, except in the most casual way."

"But," she said, "I have had my eyes open, and I am delighted."

"Delighted? Well, I should think so! You can count me in on that, my dear. But perhaps the path to Miss Fessendon's heart bears the footprints of some other fortunate young man."

"We can trust Richard to find that out soon, I fancy."

Mr. Roberts of New York

As the evening conference was about to begin, Mr. Roberts of New York rose and said, "My dear friends, I have been greatly impressed with the spirit and fellowship of this occasion. When I joined the company this afternoon, I observed immediately the earnest purpose which had brought you all together, and felt the charm of the Christian atmosphere of this home, to which God has given such signal blessings.

"I recall with pleasure when I first saw Mr. Dodge. We were little more than boys and met by accident, while climbing a mountain in Switzerland. He was accompanied by a student, in whose education his father had been greatly interested, and I was with my dear father. It is a long look back to those early days, but a friendship began then which has continued to this hour.

"As we sat at dinner, I wondered if ever there had been just such a conference as this in the history of the Christian church. As I understand, it was born in the desire of our host, first of all, that he might better care for the interest of his local church, and secondly, that he might better inform

himself concerning home and foreign missions.

“Personally, I want to say that I have become so interested in late years in the marvelous movements in the Kingdom of God, that my attention has become about equally divided between my professional life, and the performance of duties which have resulted from fiduciary relations, into which I have entered with the profoundest pleasure and satisfaction.

“One of the most charming experiences that I have ever had was a trip around the world, not first of all to see its cathedrals, mosques, castles, rivers and mountains, the evidences of past civilization, and the glories of the present age in which we live, but my great joy, and indeed, the reason for the long journey, was that I might myself visit our mission fields and study the progress of Christianity among the various nations.

“Previous to that trip, I had made extensive journeys through our own country, studying the marvelous developments in our home mission work.

“That which I have said concerning myself, however, is very incidental to my purpose this evening, for I cannot recall in my journeyings through our own and many distant lands, that I have ever

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attended a conference as unique and delightful as that which has been made possible to us by the Christian hospitality and the genial welcome of our friends."

Mr. Dodge was evidently much impressed by these unexpected remarks of Mr. Roberts, and replied:

"I greatly appreciate these gracious words that have fallen from the lips of our honored brother, who has been not only my sincere friend these many years, but also my personal counsel in some of the most important legal affairs which have ever come into my life.

"Among the letters which I most heartily treasure are several which he wrote to me describing the impressions which he received during his many missionary journeys. Indeed, my own interest in missions has been largely stimulated by my acquaintance with him.

"During our afternoon conference, something that was said made me determine to persuade my wife, if possible, to accompany me on certain journeys, perhaps even more extensive than those which my friend Roberts has taken."

"If you can persuade your wife?" interrupted

Mrs. Dodge, "Your wife is already persuaded, for what are we going to do, when our son and daughter have left us again and you have nothing to occupy your attention?"

"Very well," said Mr. Dodge, "I call you to witness, that within a month from to-day, I will be ready for the trip."

"Aha," said his wife, "why do you say a month, I will be ready to go in two weeks."

And so the evening session opened, for the conference, if it could be called such, was simply one long flow of informal conversation in which all felt free to join.

All but one of the company was present, for it seemed best that Miss Fessendon should retire at an early hour.

Accompanied by the ladies of the party, Richard had pushed the invalid chair to the electric elevator, which several years before had been built to accommodate Mrs. Dodge's invalid mother.

A few moments later Richard seated himself by his mother, whose hand he lovingly held, while he gave the closest attention to the words which were to turn forever the current of his life.

"Well," said Mr. Dodge, "I think we are now

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ready for whatever Doctor Judkins may have to bring to us, and I haven't the least idea what he is to talk about. We want him to feel perfectly free to speak to us an hour, or more if he wishes, for Mr. Roberts is to continue his visit here for several days, and anything that is not finished to-night can be postponed until to-morrow."

A Specialist Speaks

Dr. Judkins was a man of large attainments. His medical education had been thorough, and had included two years of study in Germany. After his professional studies were concluded, reverses in his father's business made it necessary that he should establish himself in a small city, where he could easily reach his parents at the shortest notice.

Instead therefore of going to a metropolis, he had settled down in a New England city of the smaller type, which was, however, very proud of its culture. During later years, he had specialized in the treatment of the eyes. His services were widely sought and his skill was highly prized. His income had slowly increased until he had considerable property, and his investments, while conservative, had proved very fortunate. He had never married.

Mr. Dodge felt the Doctor would bring a well considered address.

As he rose to speak, he said, "I too, have been impressed with the uniqueness of this conference, and I hope that I may make, in my humble way, some slight contribution to its abounding success.

"It is natural, as you all know, for every pro-

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fessional man to look upon the world, and upon the church and missions, through eyes somewhat colored by his studies and observations.

"I am therefore to speak to you to-night about 'Astigmatism,' and at any time, I hope, as I make my remarks, there will be the same spirit of freedom, that has characterized our conference up to this hour.

"Astigmatism is a disease of the eyes, which I have somewhat thoroughly studied. What is Astigmatism?

"Well, let me tell you of a friend of mine, who unconsciously suffered from this disease. He was a professor in a well known institution, but suddenly lost his vigor, grew pale, and was granted a year for rest. It proved to be a period of constant pain and disappointment. European specialists did their very best for him, but he could not get any help from their treatment, so he had to return to his home with a heavy heart.

"At this point his physician suggested, that his eyes might be the cause of his sickness, but he replied that they were the strongest part of his body, and so far as he knew never caused him any trouble; yet an oculist pronounced his trouble

'Astigmatism,' and gave him relief at once, so that he soon plunged into his studies more deeply than ever and to-day he revels in prodigious labors.

"As I have thought it over, I have come to the conclusion that of all the 'isms' that have afflicted the church, Astigmatism is among the worst, because it is the most insidious. To define this trouble in a few words, it is simply the failure of the lenses of the eyes to focus an object to a true point. There are several varieties or degrees which frequently produce optical illusions.

"Spiritual Astigmatism also afflicts many people with its painful influence. In fact, I have observed that it steals quietly even into a minister's or deacon's life, and indeed, into the life of any Christian and always injures religious prospects.

"Now, I would be the last one to say a word in criticism of ministers, for my grandfather was a minister and two of my brothers entered the ministry.

"One went out as a missionary to Burma where he died of fever after twenty years of noble service, and the other is still a faithful servant of Christ and labors with the consecration that makes me ashamed of my own life, as he works away at the problem of a downtown city church.

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"But after I have said all this, I must say that I have met more than one minister who had As-tigmatism. The ministers have their trials, which I believe that no one in this company realizes more than I myself. The shady side of a minister's life ought sometime to be written, but yet I want to say here to-night that I believe the two ministers here in this company will conclude that my remarks are made in charity, and will incidentally remind them of one or more pastors whom they know.

"The fact is, the churches that our ministers serve are not in an ideal condition. Things are not as sweet as many doubtless believe. In all of these churches matters are a bit deranged, the body is somewhat ill-disciplined. It has a narrowed vision and an imperfect missionary impulse.

"The poor minister sees all this and he often feels the embarrassment of being the pastor of his church.

"Outwardly everything seems to be going well, but it seems as if it might be God's time for his servant to enter another field where the rose bushes have no diaconal thorns, and where the soil is less obdurate."

"Diaconal thorns," exclaimed Mr. Dodge, "that is a new idea to me, but it very well describes the

character of the deacon we used to have in our church a few years ago, before he went out west to take up a claim, where I fear he made some home missionary pastor a good deal of trouble."

"Well," said Dr. Judkins, as he resumed, "there are such things as diaconal thorns, and while I don't believe they grow on the vines of any deacon who is here, yet you wouldn't have to go many miles from this town to probably find some.

"But to return to this minister about whom I am speaking; he is a little restless in his pastoral relations. The church has shown no dissatisfaction, has never hinted a change, but the pastor has quietly written a letter to some brother minister, that he could be moved. He would not like to take the bloom from the peach of pastoral peace by openly candidating, but would be glad to arrange at least an exchange, near to some church, whose committee might be naturally drawn by his presence, and hear him preach.

"This dear brother sings in his parish, 'Home, Sweet Home,' but to his brother minister he sings 'I would not stay away.'

"My friends, ministers, as well as laymen, have to learn often by walking a painful path that 'Godli-

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ness with contentment is great gain.' ”

“That is exactly so,” said the Judge, “I don’t know why we shouldn’t have longer pastorates, and if certain good ministers were as long-suffering as their people are, they wouldn’t want to move so often from place to place.”

“Well,” said Mr. Dodge, “some ministers have a terrible experience, for they certainly have a rather hard time of it with certain churches, and the laymen are in some quarters getting so organized. that the leadership of the pastors is injured. I look upon this tendency with grave concern. But I know some pastors who feel that there is such uncertainty in changing pastorates, that painful as their present positions are, they fear that if they do change they will simply be jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.”

“Yes, yes,” said Dr. Judkins, “But has it ever occurred to the ministers at such times to look within, not without? It may be that they are unconsciously held by Astigmatism, for its first effect in life is restlessness. Their eyes have failed to focus properly and the entire nervous system of the spiritual life has suffered.

“The astigmatic minister has already probably

relaxed his pastoral and student habits and folded his wings and is now waiting for the mild winds of heaven to favor his outward flight. For some time he has been scanning the evangelistic horizon. I knew one such minister who was in this exact frame of mind. And after looking far and wide he engaged a man who never failed to stir a town in three weeks. He seemed to believe that a pastor could leave home best immediately after children are born into the kingdom of God and are clinging to the skirts of their mother, the church.

“Well, that evangelist came. He was not of the pastoral order of which we have many choice souls left in our denomination, whose record is on high and who have been God’s messengers in many dark hours to discouraged churches and pastors.

“Now, this evangelist who came to help this restless minister, came from a distance. He was selected, I fear, because ‘A far come cow has long horns.’

“The first thing he did when he arrived was to have all the pulpit furniture removed, that he might have plenty of space in which to operate, indeed that was exactly what he did, and then he proceeded to tell the people who he was, and what he wanted.

“Well, brethren, you have probably seen such

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a man, and I remember the particular man whom I am describing. He succeeded in breaking things up in that community and made it impossible for many years after, for even a good sane evangelist to succeed in that town. In fact, the next evangelist who tried to help the church was sacrificed and unnecessarily so, because of the fearful inheritance of prejudice against all evangelistic work.

"This particular brother repeated many of Mr. Moody's best stories, as the result of his own experience when in New York or in some leading city of Ohio, California or Texas, and among other things he shot every night at what was for him a man of straw, the higher criticism, concerning which he knew as little as he did of his own ignorance. But he gave his hearers in that manufacturing community the impression that the Bible is in serious danger of destruction and that he was heaven's chosen worker to parry the thrust and break the blade of the sword of each of its foes.

"Those of you who know me best realize that I am not friendly to the higher criticism, but I could not escape the fear that the people in that place, after hearing his tirades three weeks, with the final impressions which he made upon them, were in danger

of going over bodily to the higher criticism and adopting everything that higher critics might say, if for no other reason than that they believed that what this man attacked was probably a good thing after all.

“Now, I fully believe in evangelists. I was converted myself under the preaching of one of these men of God, and I never shall forget an evangelist who came to our church a few years ago and proved to be a very angel of God to us all.

“I thought I knew the general outlines of Bible truth, when he arrived, but he taught me things new and strange and vastly helpful about the extent to which I ought to consecrate my life and time and money to the Kingdom of God.

“And I also want to put myself on record here as a foe to a cold, impassive ministry that sees no conversions, tries to have none, and sleeps at the post while men are perishing and which is not trying to live out what Paul wrote to Timothy, ‘Do the work of an evangelist.’

“But I wish some one with inventive genius would contrive a muzzle for the evangelist who talks of things of which he is ignorant, and who goes about with his clap-trap methods and leaves only pledge

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cards as the white but fruitless harvest.

"The best evangelists that I have ever met are not satisfied with the mere expression of desire, but teach the converts to pray and to make a public profession of their faith before the people, and advise them strongly to be baptized.

"Yes, and after that wild-eyed evangelist whom I am describing went away, it took as much more effort for our pastor to persuade the few, even the most hopeful of the converts, that they ought to be baptized, as it would ordinarily take to persuade the people that they ought to repent.

"Now, after this minister, who had this strange evangelist come to help him had gathered the harvest, which was meagre and doubtful enough, he prepared to go, and he did go, but he left the church in the most unfavorable spiritual condition that it had known during his entire residence. In fact, he had been living in that place for only a little while, but when he went away he remarked that even 'St. Paul never tarried over three years in a place,' which I am sure, my friends, even speaking in the greatest charity, was his only resemblance to that apostle.

"Well, let me tell you just how it was. When

he went to that church first, and I am describing something that occurred long ago, he spent the first year visiting in his parish. He was a good caller, but he never went around a second time. He had a way of slapping men on the shoulder, helping the farmers to pitch in a load of hay, went right out into the kitchen where their wives were working, sat down with the men in his shirt sleeves to dinner, and was very different from some pastors, for this man was a good mixer.

"The first year he simply spent getting acquainted, as I said, but the second year, he talked up repairing the church, and he succeeded in what he undertook.

"Toward the end of the third year, he planned the revival of which I have spoken, and on the wave of that revival, he sailed forth to a land unknown. I wondered at the time whether he would really find a harbor or simply strike a rock-bound coast.

"What was the trouble with this good man? He had it in him to succeed. He was well trained for the ministry, and was well born. But he could not settle down to a long pull, so he became restless. Why should he have left? The converts, who came to him in what seemed to be an abnormal re-

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vival, needed to be strengthened and others in the community to be won, who were reached in large numbers by his successor.

"The church list required revision, for out of three hundred members, seventy-five were non-residents, Yes, and the benevolences were sadly neglected. But this brother could not pass that period of painful quiet that comes in every pastorate which, if one outlives, he may stay as long as health, tact, spiritual power, and brains, permit. He doubtless believed that he was led by the Spirit, so resigned and soon after, I am sure, he was in some equally difficult field, or was eager for a settlement, but had none."

"Yes," said Mr. Roberts, "I had a classmate in college, who has turned out to be just that kind of a minister. He was a fine fellow, gave every promise of being eminently useful in the ministry, but he simply couldn't stick to a difficult task and conquer it. He always has grown restless after about eighteen months, and every one in his family has suffered with him, until he has entered upon a new pastorate. Then too, every pastorate that he has had, has seemingly been harder and harder and the last four have been only one year in length and have terminated each spring.

"I met his daughter about six months ago and asked her how her father was getting on, and she said:

" 'He would get on first rate if he would only stay longer.' "

" 'I am not living at home now,' she continued, 'but this moving annually from town to town has greatly interrupted the education of the younger children and one of my brothers wrote me the other day, that even the hens have become so accustomed to staying only a year in a place, that every spring when it comes time for father to move again, they promptly fall on their backs and hold up their feet to have them tied.' "

"I can't vouch for the truthfulness of it," said Mr. Roberts, "but I am simply telling you what the minister's daughter told me.

"But to continue, let me say that the second evidence of Astigmatism is impatience, and I have seen both ministers and deacons and pretty good men, who became so impatient, that it was hard to live with them.

"Now when a minister becomes impatient, the real trouble with him is that his eyes do not focus properly. It is a disease with him and therefore we

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ought to be charitable oftener than we sometimes are inclined to be.

"This impatient minister thinks that the deacons are too slow and insist too much on their own radical experiences for the young converts, who seem in many cases, to be convicted by the Holy Spirit of righteousness before they are of sin and the judgment.

"He is also greatly distressed because the deacons will not allow the young people to enter the church without promising to forego certain amusements and pleasures, which they do not favor disciplining some members of the church for doing.

"This minister also is thoroughly convinced that the superintendent of the Sunday school is not working along aggressive lines, and cannot conceal his feelings when he makes his pastoral calls. He has a certain policy, and impatient of delay, forces it before the time is ripe, and so he divides his parish.

"Then without realizing what he is doing, he gives up the sweet song of the Gospel, and begins to scold. The veil of criticism is over his eyes, and when the people go into church they wonder whose turn will come next.

"But the impatient brother, with whom I sympa-

thize more than I can tell you, finds all these criticisms are boomerangs, and so after a year or two in which matters grow from bad to worse, he becomes a broken hearted martyr, waits for something to turn up while the church, in ways not quite heavenly, turns him down and out. The wind is cold and the world also, the sea calls to the shore, but no church calls to him in his hour of despair.

“Churches are sometimes cruel, but ministers are sometimes critical. The troubles that come to our churches are frequently the fault of the minister, but often, if not oftener the fault of a group of men who do not go to the minister in his impatience and quietly reason with him and help him through the crisis of his life. The fact is, that at such a time the eyes of several people do not focus properly, that is all, for they are all afflicted with Astigmatism.

“The third and most serious stage of this disease however is melancholia, which comes to a great many ministers and more or less leading members of our churches, when they look abroad upon the world.

“People that have these symptoms are pessimists. The fact is, the melancholy man is a sick man. To

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inspire hope, one must be hopeful. The melancholy minister or deacon is a frost that turns the church vines black. His face aches if he smiles more than once or twice a day.

"If he is a minister, he has 'Monday blues' all through the week. He cannot conceal it, for what we are cannot be hidden. To him his church is degenerating rapidly. He has set himself with sober face to stem the tide, but he has few enthusiastic followers. Occasionally he gets fresh courage by attending all the leading interdenominational and denominational conventions. Six weeks out of his working year he spends in this way, and comes back each time inspired, but soon is sad again.

"If this good brother spent less time at conventions and more in prayer and labor for conversions and enlarging the world-wide vision of his church, he would probably never reach this third stage of Astigmatism."

A Scientific Test

As Dr. Judkins was about to continue, Mrs. Dodge, who had been called to the telephone, returned to the room and said:

"I must interrupt you a moment, Doctor Judkins, to explain that I am called down into one of the villages for awhile but will return as soon as possible, and I trust before the evening's conference is concluded."

Richard begged to accompany his mother, but as she was anxious to have him hear the rest of the remarks on Astigmatism she said:

"No, Richard, you stay right here. Phillippe will take care of me, and Roger is at the door, eager to go along too."

As she passed out of the room for her wraps, she whispered to Mrs. Arnold and as the ladies disappeared, Doctor Judkins said:

"Mrs. Dodge, you may be sure, is doing a piece of home mission work this evening of which many women in our churches have not learned the joy.

"But to come back to Astigmatism, let me say that there are certain tests which always determine with scientific accuracy the astigmatic eye. The

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method of the oculist will surprise you with its simplicity, for he simply places a sunburst before his patient and asks him, if he can see all of the lines with equal distinctness."

Richard was very much interested in this little glimpse into his professional life, and Doctor Judkins, noticing the keen attention of the young man, seemed unconsciously to address his remarks very largely to his eager listener.

"Yes," continued the Doctor, "it often occurs that the patient can see only half of the tangent lines at a single glance, although he looks with all his might to see the other half. The discovery startles him.

"We had once in our church a far-sighted minister, but he was visionary. He always had a new scheme and a new piece of machinery to add to the already overcrowded machinery hall of our church. He also introduced new methods before the old ones were properly worked out, and our best people soon came to regard him as a dreamer. He was a splendid man, but he had a far-away look. His sermons were musty with ancient and

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medieval allusions. Alexander, Caesar, Cicero, Augustine, Luther, and John Knox, were drawn forth almost every week from their tombs to prove his platitudes. He was always looking backward."

"Yes," interrupted the Judge, "in the country church where I grew up, we had a minister who was a very learned man, and preached what were regarded as very good sermons, but nearly all his illustrations were drawn from philosophical and historical sources, about which the people in the church knew next to nothing. Some of them thought, however, that they had become quite learned in history and philosophy because they had heard so much about it from the minister, and there was a sort of glamour about all he said. Bye and bye, however, when he went away the deacons talked the matter over, and when a young man, who had just been graduated from the seminary, was on the point of being called to the pastorate, they wanted to make sure he should know just what kind of preaching the church demanded. After the Sunday morning service, the deacons asked the candidate to go down into the vestry with them to have a little talk.

"A moment later, as they were sitting around the

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old wood stove, Deacon Rideout, who was nearly eighty, said:

“ ‘My young brother, our whole committee of six are here, and we want to say that we like your preaching first rate, and the way you develop your points, and stick to your text, and we think we would like to call you to be our minister. We have had, however, a strange experience in our church, for the minister who has gone, and who was one of the best men who ever drew breath, has been preaching over our heads for nigh on to nine years, and as a church we are hungering for the simple food of the Gospel.

“ ‘We are willing to call you, brother, if you will solemnly promise one thing.’ ”

The young man saw how earnestly the brethren were leading up to something, and wondered what it could be all about. At length Deacon Rideout said:

“ ‘Well, to come right down to business, my brother, and to state the matter just exactly as it is, we want you to promise us that if you come to be our minister you will let Greece and Rome alone.’ ”

Mr. Roberts, as was his custom when much pleased, as Whittier always did, slapped his knee

and laughed as if he would never stop. It proved so contagious that for a moment Dr. Judkins found it impossible to continue his remarks and before taking up the broken thread of thought again, he said:

“Well, Judge, what was the young man’s reply?”

“What did he reply? He simply rose to the occasion and without a smile on his face, raised up his hand and said:

“‘I solemnly promise to leave Greece and Rome alone.’

“He kept his promise too, and when he came among us drew all his illustrations from stone walls, planting, plowing, harrowing, harvests, trees, birds, flowers, the tides and everything else we were seeing or handling every day. It was a tremendous change, I can tell you, for in that man’s ministry it seemed as if everything around us became spiritualized, and I never return to the old place now, that the holy associations, created by his simple sermons, do not overwhelm me with a flood of sacred memories.”

For an instant it seemed as if everyone was instinctively calling up the picture of the young man just beginning his ministry, and finding his parables, as Jesus did, in the commonest things of Nature and

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simple rural life. Waiting for the full impression of the Judge's remarks to have their effect, Doctor Judkins continued:

"The far-sighted minister too often wishes only to preach and to roam about from Dan to Beersheba, lecturing on nameable and unnameable subjects, as if a man could not find enough in his parish to call forth and employ his best energies. Of course, occasionally a Metropolitan Nestor, of whom we have a few in our denomination, who has pastoral assistants, may suitably do this, but it has always seemed to me that the average man, who must both instruct and shepherd his flock, cannot divide his energies without a mutilation of his work.

"The minister with this kind of Astigmatism is frequently far afield for other interests, than those of his proper calling, and is in danger of somewhat neglecting his work for the causes, to which he has attached his name. I know a bedridden saint in a certain church, who did not see her pastor more than once a year in six years, and yet he could not count two hundred calling places in his parish. It seems to me that as laymen, we ought to go and have a frank talk with such a minister. This man, of whom I am speaking, long had his eye on some-

thing larger and higher. He regarded himself as only on a stepping-stone of the stairs of ecclesiastical promotion. I fear very much that the angels must weep over any man, whether he is a minister or not, who tries to reach the goal of his ambition by neglecting the simple duties that come to him each day."

"Ah, yes," said Rev. Gideon Bennett, "such a man is on a stepping-stone, perhaps, but woe to the minister who falls on such a stairway." And then he continued:

"How well I remember what a minister said to me several years ago about a brother, who took a little church in a village near to the town where he was located in the country. When my friend called to wish him well in his pastorate, the stranger spoke in a rather depreciating way of the smallness of his present church, but remarked that he regarded it as only a stepping-stone to something larger. My friend returned home and told his wife about it at tea that evening, and she remarked:

" 'I will prophesy that he will not stay there two years, and that when he goes away, it won't be to a larger place.' "

"Did the prophecy come true?" inquired Helen.

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"Indeed it did, for my friend went over within fifteen months and read his resignation, and the poor brother had a hard time finding a new place, and at last located in a little church where, be it said to his credit, he settled down to hard work and accomplished excellent results and has recently gone to a very strong parish."

"But to return to the stairway," said Dr. Judkins, "I am sure that it is hardly a Scala Santa, and the brother who climbs it, I fear, does not ascend it prayerfully and on his knees. If he does, I am sure before he has climbed very far, he will not only hear the words which Luther heard: 'The just shall live by faith,' but also the words 'The man who has faith must prove it by his faithfulness to any task, however difficult and monotonous.'"

"You will never make a truer statement in your life, Doctor, than that," exclaimed Mr. Dodge.

Dr. Judkins said, "There is only one other kind of far-sighted minister I will refer to, and he is the good man who sees the distant view alone, and talks of foreign missions all the time, but he is so rare nowadays, since we have had our new budget apportionments, that he needs no serious attention at this time."

“Yes,” said Mr. Roberts: “I knew several such men a few years ago, but they see things differently now and conclude that all missionary enterprises constitute one great task; of course the conversion of the heathen world is the major part of the divine undertaking, and calls for very large gifts, but no part of the work can be safely neglected.”

The Horizontal Line

"The sunburst line test also reveals the near-sighted minister and laymen. These earnest brethren have a most exalted idea of their own parish work. The horizon of each is circumscribed by his community, or at most, by his state. He ventures not beyond Jerusalem or Palestine. Others, he says, must care for the uttermost parts of the earth, for he has quite all he can do to get the people to meet their home expenses. He believes in state missions, at most, home missions. There he stops short.

"Now too much, my friends, is said to-day of missionary enterprises for me to emphasize the littleness of such a conception. I know one pastor, and I have no doubt that he has many who agree with him, who will not assist a brother to a pastorate, unless he is sure that he will develop the world-wide beneficence of the church, to which he recommends him. He told me recently, that he was through trying to keep men in the ministry, who threw missionary appeals into the waste basket, refused a hearing to the secretaries, and pigeon-holed the apporportionments sent to their churches."

"That man talks just right," said Mr. Dodge, "for

a minister who will not be true to the 'Great Commission,' and just does nothing but devote himself to the few square miles where he lives, is about three generations behind his time. My observation is that the ministry of such a man is of slight value."

"Yes," continued the Doctor, "such a man may have some converts, but if they are not trained to Christian service and to give to missions, and if they are not taught concerning the purpose of Christ to save the whole world, they will have a hard time making much progress, I fear.

"The near-sighted minister, I have observed, seldom ever prays publicly for missions and it is only when some missionary pastor exchanges with him that his people get a little of the world-wide Gospel, and hear a truly Christian prayer.

"But you can't always judge ministers by the gifts of their churches. Often the ministers are not to blame, whose churches contribute little or nothing for beneficent objects, for wide-visioned pastors sometimes find themselves in churches that are dominated by one or two influential but close-fisted laymen. But on the whole, the large number of churches, that made no missionary offerings last year, are a sad commentary on the status of many anti-

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missionary or non-missionary pastors.

“In some of these churches, however, the ministers are not to blame for they are very wrongly held responsible for conditions which they did not create and which only long years can change.

“A few nights ago I was reading Dr. Thompson’s volume on ‘Foreign Missions.’ In it he quotes from Dr. Somerville’s, ‘Lectures on Missions’ these significant words:

“ ‘My official position for so many years as foreign secretary, and the visits which during that time I paid to several places, gave me fitting opportunity for observing the state of matters, and I often said that I scarcely knew a congregation favored with a minister who took an active part in mission work that was not prosperous.’

“The same writer also says Voltaire’s definition of an educated man is a good description of an educated minister, ‘a man who is not satisfied to survey the universe from his church belfry.’

“If a man is astigmatically inclined can his trouble be remedied?

“The tendency of the disease in the spiritual body, as in the physical, is gradually to increase its ravages while the entire religious perceptions are

strained or weakened or destroyed, until at last, one can see through a glass not even darkly.

“But the remedy is as simple as the Gospel, and a good many need it, for let us remember, that not only a few ministers here and there, but many laymen and young men going into the professions, whom one can find in almost every church, have Astigmatism of some kind.

“Now, in describing the remedy I may say that we are simply to see with the eyes of Christ, for He is both oculist and optician. What more profound words did He ever utter than when He said:

“ ‘If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light, but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.’

“These words apply equally well to us, and are strangely in harmony with our latest findings in the scientific study of the eyes. A life hidden in Christ is our only deliverance from this disease; for if we dwell in Him we shall see through His eyes. But to be delivered from Astigmatism, we must ever see truth from His standpoint and from His vantage ground. Monte Rosa, when seen from Italy is totally unlike the same mountain when seen from the summit of the Gorner Grat, but to him who climbs to

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the top of Monte Rosa itself and looks down on its slopes, all contradictions are harmonized and the mountain has unity.

“Jesus looked down on every truth, because he had the superior view of truth. He explained it in simple language because He had experienced it.

“The same rule applies to us. To talk beyond the experience of our faith is not genuine. Our knowledge is really absolute, although only relative, if it be grounded in our spiritual experience. A man can be safely dogmatic regarding a truth that he has spiritually digested.

“If we always see truth through Christ’s eyes and hence from His standpoint, we shall be cured of our Astigmatism, although we may be somewhat peculiar, but only in the possession of a new power in Christian service, and in having a fresh apostolic perspective of saving truth.”

Glimpses of What Might Be

As Dr. Judkins finished his address he turned to Mr. Dodge, and said: "This is my personal contribution to the conference of the evening, and my one regret is that it seemed to be so closely allied with my professional view of things." He then walked to the empty chair by Richard's side and sat down as Mr. Roberts said:

"I have been greatly impressed by the Doctor's remarks and wish that sometime there might be a small conference called at which each speaker would pour the Christian ideas, which he has thought out, into the molds of his professional and business life.

"The lawyer, banker, teacher, physician, architect, engineer, merchant, manufacturer, electrician, tradesman and farmer could make old truths live if they would simply do what Doctor Judkins has so interestingly accomplished this evening.

"This was the real method of Jesus, and I hope that our host may sometime assemble a group of men and women to do this."

"It is an inspired suggestion," replied Mr. Dodge, "and I will go into the matter with my friend who has suggested it, and try to map out a plan to bring

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this about as soon as possible and perhaps by the Christmas holidays, when my daughter and son will be at home again."

During the brief intermission which followed Richard engaged Doctor Judkins in conversation about the profession of medicine, incidentally asking his opinion of the worth of medical missions.

"They are of great value," came the answer, "and the crying need of the day."

"I am delighted to hear you say that."

"Yes," was the reply, "and if I were fifteen years younger, I would offer myself for medical missionary service either at home or abroad."

"The fact is, our profession is over-crowded in this country, but this is not true even in the most progressive of the eastern lands. Suitable hospitals are absolutely needed, and they must not be only built, but must be well endowed, so that their work may go forward without any interruption."

"I firmly believe that the time is coming when men and women of wealth will take hold of this Christian philanthropy in a way that will surprise the world."

"What would it cost to establish and endow a hospital?"

"Well, I have looked into this matter a little, to be ready to present it in a comprehensive way to any person, who might be interested in the proposition. My conclusion is that a hospital in China would probably cost about \$60,000.00, and to carry on its work in an enlarged and comprehensive way it should have an endowment of \$250,000.00 to yield an annual income of approximately \$10,000.00.

"There is also at present a great need of a hospital in Mexico, but \$40,000.00 would be sufficient for this plant and an endowment of \$150,000.00 would be all that is required for its maintenance.

"Both buildings would cost, you see \$100,000.00, and an endowment of \$400,000.00 would carry them on forever."

"Yes," said Richard, in rather a hesitating manner, "\$500,000.00 would build both and keep them going as long as hospitals are needed."

"Exactly so, my boy, and a man who addresses himself to such a task would never have spiritual Astigmatism."

"Well," said Richard, "that would be something to escape." "Indeed it would, and many a

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young man, who is looking forward to the study of medicine, has this disease in some of its most aggravated forms.

"But about these hospitals and their endowment, let me say that the physician who could establish these two hospitals could care for both with a suitable division of his time and with competent assistants. A year or two of residence in each alternately would tend to standardize them both."

"Yes," replied Richard laughingly, "his interest in Mexico would cure him of his far-sightedness and his devotion to China would cure him of his near-sightedness and so he would at least escape two severe forms of Astigmatism."

"True enough," exclaimed the Doctor, "and with even two hospitals on his hands, ten thousand miles apart, a physician would have a far simpler task than a college classmate of mine, who, starting with poverty has become an international merchant, and yet his business runs with the precision of clock-work and his honest profits are growing yearly."

"My dear fellow, if you could operate two hospitals such as I have indicated you would have a life's work mapped out before you and a man's task

calling for the best that is in you.

"That all-round, general education that you received at dear old Brown would stand you in good stead in attacking the difficult professional problems, which would require constant activity and great resourcefulness."

"Without doubt," said Richard, "and such a man would incidentally show that home and foreign missions are one."

"Yes," said Doctor Judkins, "as they always should have been and will be again sometime, I hope.

"Indeed," he continued, "I know the secretaries of the Home and Foreign Mission Societies, and recently when I was in attendance at a conference, in which they were talking over their wide-spread and intersphering work, I couldn't have told from anything said that they were not members of one and the same society, if I hadn't known the real nature of their administrative labors."

As the two Brown men were speaking others had been discussing the address of the evening with Mr. Roberts, who was enlivening the conversation with the account of some thrilling experiences which he had in rescuing two college men from the Bowery

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in New York, fellows who were down and out, and whom he had found in the bread-line.

Meanwhile Mr. Dodge was talking at the telephone with his wife, who had called him up to report the experiences which she and Mrs. Arnold were having in the home of a Hungarian family, that had recently passed through Ellis Island and had hardly become adjusted to their new environment.

He learned that the two ladies had been spending the last hour in a very heroic treatment of a severe attack of croup, with which one of the little Hungarian children had been seized. When at last the croup was controlled, the mother, absent-mindedly opening what she supposed was a closet door, had stepped off the cellar stairs, breaking her right arm. Phillippe, waiting with the automobile at the door, was despatched for the physician while neighbors had brought up the poor Hungarian mother, who was waiting as patiently as could be expected, but in great pain.

Mr. Dodge immediately sent Richard to join his mother and assist the doctor.

When the conference was again resumed Mr. Dodge explained the continued absence of the ladies

and gave the rest of the evening over to his friend from New York.

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Mr. Roberts rose and said. "It is now quarter past nine, and at ten o'clock I shall stop talking as I know you will all have had enough of a subject, even as interesting as the one which we have been discussing to-day. My remarks will be as informal as I can make them—indeed I shall tell you of what three friends of mine have reported to me within a month. The first of these was a college classmate, who met last week the man that led our class in Denison University.

"Since the day of their graduation they had met but three times in twenty-five years and then only to clasp hands for a moment. Recently, however, while attending a Laymen's Convention, they were accidentally assigned to the same room in a crowded hotel.

"One of these, by great perseverance and industry had accumulated a modest fortune. He had always succeeded in conducting his business according to the ethical teachings of Jesus. Indeed, he deliberately became a publisher, because it was so closely allied to Christian work that its success would mean the advancement of Christianity.

“He was also a trustee of two institutions, the president of the board of trustees of a third, and one of the board of managers of a national missionary society; probably giving in the course of the year a quarter to a third of his time to the consideration of the affairs of the Kingdom of God. Frequently his business engagements were timed in different parts of the nation, so that he might attend certain Christian conventions and join in the deliberations of important committees.

“His classmate had been recently called to take charge of a seminary church, succeeding one of the older ministers, who after long years of service had resigned in full mental vigor under the gentle restraint of age. And yet one of his classmates, who was born the same year had just been elevated to the District Court, another was the efficient mayor of a great city, a third, who was two years his senior, had just been elected to the Senate of the United States, and a fourth to the presidency of one of the great banks of New York City.

“This classmate was about to enter upon his third pastorate. He was in growing demand as a thoughtful but popular preacher with a very burning message and an incisive style and decisive delivery. He

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was heard also with intense interest by his brethren in the ministry, which I am told is quite the exception. These two, who met so happily, settled down the first evening to a long talk covering the busy years which had intervened since the care-free days of college life.

"Each agreed that he had consumed the first ten years in finding himself. The layman, however, was surprised to hear his ministerial classmate make this assertion, for he said he had heard it widely remarked what phenomenal success he had enjoyed in his first pastorate, which lasted exactly that period.

"The preacher, however, looked at his business classmate in great surprise and quickly replied:

" 'You are mistaken, I failed in that pastorate.'

"Then he went on hastily to say:

" 'Others think I made a notable success but my heart is always pained when I hear such remarks. The nature of my work there was widely heralded by church correspondents who are, you know, not always inspired. The memory of those years chills my soul.'

" 'But you certainly did much constructive work there,' " interrupted the publisher.

“ ‘Yes,’ was the reply. ‘I found the church edifice in a dilapidated condition and during the first period of my pastorate directed my energies toward its enlargement and thorough repair. The congregation grew and I was in demand as a speaker on many important occasions in the nearer towns and cities. I was also intensely interested in the moral improvement of the community and indeed was the chairman of a local society for the enforcement of law. Later the presidency of the village improvement society was thrust upon me. Our Sunday school became the largest in the county. The young people’s society, which had had a precarious life, was re-organized. A men’s league was started which grew to large proportions and a boys’ club was begun, which ended in a summer camp that attracted wide attention. I also organized a ministers’ conference, that became the largest in that part of the state.

“ ‘During the pastorate, too, we never went a year without some additions to the church.

“ ‘But in the larger sense I failed, yes I miserably failed! My sky line was too narrow. I lived for that church alone and it lived almost exclusively for itself. Once a year, to maintain our self-respect, we contributed in a meagre fashion

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to the leading missionary societies but I never urged the people to give, indeed I gave little myself. When the secretaries came, for which privilege they occasionally asked, my people heard concerning missions, but never at any other time.'

" 'I am amazed,' said the layman, 'to hear you confess to such stupidity of soul.' "

" 'But the worst is to come,' he continued. The women maintained their organizations and went about for the annual dollar, but that was all. They did once ask for a monthly Sunday evening missionary concert, but I feared it would lessen the congregation and we did not try the experiment. I looked like a real honey-bee, but when it came to missions, I was a bumble bee, and often I fear a wasp. At least I gathered very little honey for the Kingdom of God. Indeed I was full of criticism of missions and the missionaries and the secretaries. I spoke freely and often in the presence of my younger brethren in the ministry concerning the terrible expense of gathering funds. I also spoke lightly of the literature sent to me, which so frequently found its way into my wastebasket. I was as narrow as a file. I was a blind minister leading a congregation, many of whom saw that this was my one serious

fault. I was asleep during those ten years.

“ ‘What aroused you,’ asked his friend, ‘for evidently you are wide awake to-day or you would not have come five hundred miles to attend this Layman’s Convention.’ ”

“ ‘What aroused me, you ask? I will tell you. A layman did it. He had enjoyed very few educational advantages when he was young but he was at a white heat on missions. Mission study and travel had broadened his mind wonderfully. I met him as a stranger on an ocean steamer and found, that he was giving about half of his time to committee work, and important conferences in connection with our denomination and interdenominational societies. He made me feel ashamed of myself.

“ ‘He was a man of fortune and still in active business, but had long ceased to accumulate. He told me that he had gained ten times as much joy in distributing his money for missionary purposes, as he had ever gained in its accumulation.

“ ‘He had built several chapels in Cuba and Porto Rico, was thinking seriously of establishing a hospital in Mexico, and had a number of colporter wagons which he had purchased. He said also he was expecting to send out ten missionaries at his own

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expense the next year to China and India.

“ ‘In his will he had named large amounts for mission work among the Indians, for education of the Negroes, for work among the immigrants, and to make possible a forward movement in China, by enlarging and strengthening the educational work of two Foreign Mission Societies.

“ ‘He actually overcame me by the facts which he presented and inspired me by his faith and faithfulness. He knew the history of missions from the time of Christ.

“ ‘He was indeed a whirlwind on the subject and withal so modest that I felt ashamed of myself and of my narrow life. At last he challenged me to consider the facts that he had marshalled. Indeed they came so thick and fast I had to do so.

“ ‘I could not escape the man unless I jumped into the ocean and I am indebted to him beyond all my power to express. Before I reached America I saw the whole world's need. My attitude to missions was altered, I was another man.’

“ ‘Well, you met one of heaven's noblemen, didn't you?’

“ ‘Yes, indeed.’

“ ‘Then he continued, ‘How I would like to live

over those earlier years in the church, in which I kept the vision of the Kingdom of God from the lives of several hundred souls week after week!

“ ‘And yet God had mercy on that church, for He sent a pastor who took them up to the heights and showed them all the kingdoms of the earth for which Christ died. Yes, and during a pastorate of five years that dear fellow transformed and transfigured them, and when he died at his post the offerings had so rapidly increased, that they are now giving as much to benevolence as they do for their own church expenses. The young men, whom I neglected to reach, he thrilled by his missionary touch and some of them are becoming the leading laymen in the state. Several of them are coming to fortune and are already contemplating princely gifts. Well, old fellow, I learned my lesson sadly and late, but during my second pastorate I lived in a new world. State, home and foreign missions were not neglected.

“ ‘I have sorrowed indeed and keenly over that first great failure in my life, but I am looking forward with satisfaction to the pastorate to which I am going, where I shall preach to a church that has in its congregation men and women of large wealth, where young men are coming forward to

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take the place of their elders, and there is a constantly changing body of students who are to go forth to be the leaders of their people. May God forgive me for that first great failure, and keep before my eyes the world-wide vision.' "

As Mr. Roberts ended Mr. Bennett remarked:

"As a minister I want to say that in my opinion a pastor who is not trying to interest his church in missions has a fearful reckoning to face, when he meets the Lord and gives account of his stewardship."

A Talk on a Stormy Night

"Let me now report to you," continued Mr. Roberts, "what a legal friend of mine told me last month in Chicago.

"It was a fearful night with the temperature eight below zero, and, what is very unusual in such weather, snowing furiously. The door-bell of the parsonage rang at eight o'clock. The minister, who had just settled himself before his open fire to begin a new volume on 'The Philosophy of Religion' was startled, for the bell rang with such force that he feared the caller was a bearer of bad news. Very few of the thirty thousand inhabitants of the city had ventured out since nightfall, as the street car service was out of commission, and the snow was already piled high along the streets.

"Mr. Edwards, my friend and college classmate, the leading lawyer of the community, was a lover of home, and generally spent such evenings, especially, and indeed almost every evening, with his wife and children. Surely, nothing but business of the first importance could have called him out into such a storm.

"When the minister, who in his anxiety him-

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self answered the door bell, saw his parishioner, who lived quite a mile away, standing at the door, he could not conceal his astonishment, and expressed the hope that no one was sick at his home. The lawyer answered that he himself had recently recovered from a serious sickness, but felt that he must come out even on such a stormy night to talk with his pastor about a matter that had recently absorbed his attention.

“Dr. Williams, the minister, expressed his surprise that he had not learned of his sickness, and remarked that occasionally people were shut in for several days at a time, and it was always embarrassing for a minister not to have called; but he asked for pardon, because what seemed to be a neglected duty was really owing to ignorance on his part.

“A few minutes later the two men were sitting in front of the fire, on which the pastor placed a heavy log, and the caller replied: ‘Oh! this reminds me of the days when I was a boy, and lay stretched out before the fire in the old farm house of New Hampshire, when my mother read to us the lives of Adoniram Judson and David Livingstone.’

“Something in the caller’s manner made the minister ill at ease, and especially because he knew that

the man before him was the strongest layman in his church. It flashed through his mind that his father had been a New England pastor of a former generation, and carried on a farm in connection with a lifelong pastorate.

“The minister recalled also, that for the last three years the parishioner who sat by his side had been evidently out of sympathy with his preaching. His increasing absence from the prayer meetings had made him fearful that in some way the church was not ministering to the needs of the family. He remembered too that the congregation had been gradually dwindling, and he felt an embarrassment which he could not conceal, that without doubt his caller had come, perhaps representing a committee, to suggest in some delicate way his resignation.

“‘I have come to have an hour’s talk with you,’ said the lawyer, ‘if you can spare the time. Painful memories of those who talked behind my dear father’s back when I was a boy, have led me to come straight to you and say what I have on my heart, without any attempt to conceal its true significance.’

“The pastor was sure that his intuitions were correct, and replied, as he vainly tried to look his

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caller straight in the eye, 'I thank you for your frankness, and shall be glad to hear all that you have to say.'

" 'Well,' said my friend, 'I want to say that the character of the sickness with which I was afflicted made me fearful that possibly you yourself have all unconsciously suffered from the same insidious disease.'

"The minister was completely mystified by this sudden front attack, and replied:

" 'I sick? Why I never felt better in my life. I have gained eight pounds in three months, have a good appetite, sleep well and have not done as much reading or writing for many years as I am doing now, and with comparatively little fatigue.'

" 'But,' said the layman, 'you completely mistake my meaning. I don't want to judge any man, but I have come to the conclusion that you have been afflicted with the same spiritual malady from which I have suffered for twenty years, and from which I have escaped, in part at least, during the last few days.'

"The lawyer smiled a bit, when he realized the inherent difficulties of the situation which he had created, and the pastor, to parry the thrust, leaned

back and laughed heartily, saying, 'The tables are indeed turned to-night. The pew is having its innings with the pulpit, and I hope will produce better results than the pulpit has with one pew in our church, during the last year or two. One thing I will promise, that I will do as well as you have during all these years in which I have been preaching to you, and not answer back.'

"The layman joined in the laugh, but immediately his manner become serious again, and he said, 'That is what I expected you might say, and justly too, but I can soon tell you my diagnosis of the sickness from which we have both been suffering.'

"Hearing his wife singing to the children in the room above, Dr. Williams stepped across his study to close the doors that led into the living room and hallway and again sat down to gaze into the fire and listen.

" 'Last Friday night,' said the lawyer, 'I was six hundred miles away from home in a hotel, and at seven o'clock telephoned to an old college classmate, who is judge of the Superior Court in that city, and a prominent Christian man. He invited me to be his guest at a banquet. I was feeling very tired, but was so eager to see the dear old fellow that I

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accepted at once. The banquet was unique, and the Judge was the toastmaster. It was a Laymen's Missionary banquet, about which we have been reading in the papers for a year or two, and three hundred men from the churches in the vicinity were present, and a Mr. Smith, who is the secretary of the Laymen's Movement, was there and spoke for an hour. I recalled that my old chum was interested in missions when he was in college, and was the president of the Young Men's Christian Association for three years. So I said to him as I sat by his side:

" 'Do I conclude that you have kept up your interest in missions all these years?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'I am getting so interested now in the subject that I sometimes think I will resign my judgeship and devote myself to this cause, 'it all began way back in those days at Colgate.

" 'Well, let me assure you, that I felt the heat and power in the address which that man Smith gave, and then my old college friend gave a talk of fifteen minutes to the men who were present, that simply introduced me into a new world. Why, do you know, Doctor, that I got a vision last Friday night that quickly destroyed every bit of criti-

cism and coldness that I had in my heart for missions. I have called to tell you of it, and to say that from now on I purpose, as a member of this church, to get busy on this subject and to help in every way I can.'

"The pastor saw the point at once, for many times he had talked with this same layman in a way that gave him every reason to believe that he fully sympathized with the lawyer's attitude.'

" 'Now, Doctor,' said the caller, 'may I please ask three questions?' "

" 'Go on, ask three or thirty, just as you wish.' "

" 'Well,' came the quick reply, the first is this: Have you ever heard of a missionary apportionment that was sent to our church, giving in detail the amounts we were asked to strive to raise for the national and state missionary societies?' "

" 'Yes,' said the minister. 'I received it last September.' "

" 'I should like to see it. Can you show it to me?' "

" 'Dr. Williams replied, I haven't it, I regret to say. I kept it in a pigeon hole till January first, when I cleared out my desk, and then threw it into the wastebasket.' "

" 'The lawyer then asked his third question and

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said: 'Did you bring it to the attention of the deacons and the church?' "

" 'No, I did not. Our current expenses were so far behind last fall, and the interest in church work and in missions seemed to be so slight, that I felt it was unwise too do so.' "

" 'The lawyer replied, 'I had intended to ask but three questions, but I will ask a fourth.' "

" 'How do we raise the missionary money in our church?' "

"Dr. Williams was silent a moment, evidently revolving in his mind, what he should say, while the lawyer, who had built up his reputation in his profession as a cross-examiner, waited for his reply.

"Suddenly the minister experienced an emotion that he had not felt for many years, and brought face to face with a situation that almost stunned him, slowly replied:

" 'We have no method for raising missionary money.' "

"The log which had been burning fiercely, broke in the middle, a shower of sparks followed and then the light suddenly died out in the room.

"Dr. Williams was a good man, but in three pastorates, covering nearly thirty years, he had

walked along lines of least resistance, until the early missionary fires that burned in his soul had nearly expired.

“But the memory of earlier days, when he himself felt the call to missionary service, swept over his soul with the strength of the wind, that was blowing the snow against the window by the chimney, and he sat in silence for what seemed to his visitor like an hour. At length he said:

“ ‘During all these years I have deeply erred, and perhaps I ought to say have sinned.’ ”

“Then the tears started to his eyes, as he leaped to his feet and grasped the hand of his parishioner, saying, ‘I am ashamed of it all, and believe that I ought to resign next Sunday, and let some one, worthier than I am, minister to the spiritual needs of the people.’ ”

“The lawyer’s heart was deeply touched, and he exclaimed, ‘Forgive me, Doctor, I have wounded you too deeply.’ ”

“ ‘No, said the minister, not a bit, I deserved it all.’ ”

“One by one the embers died out in the fire-place as they stood there with clasped hands and in silence.

“It would be vain to describe the talk that these

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two men had during the next two hours, but when his caller passed out into the storm at eleven o'clock, the minister said:

“‘My dear fellow, I shall never forget the talk and the prayer that we have had together. I, too, have seen a new vision, and I am to start this very night a course in missionary study, beginning with the New Testament itself, and following down the centuries. We will take hold together, and redeem, if possible, the years that have been wasted.’

“As the lawyer slowly and with difficulty wended his way homeward through the drifts, he thought of the words, which his mother frequently repeated as the winter storms swept over their humble home: ‘As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth so shall my word be—’

“The next Sunday morning Dr. Williams preached a sermon on “The World-Wide Vision” which every church should have. He seemed like a new man, and spoke with a fervor, that he had never manifested before. He made no apologies for the past, but simply said, that his horizon had suddenly been widened and that he felt that he must at once give his people the benefit of his deeper Christian ex-

perience. Toward the end of the sermon he suggested, that the question of "Going and Giving" would be the subject of the next Wednesday night meeting, and he hoped that every member of the church would be present, as he had something important to say.

"When the night of the prayer meeting came, the number present was unusually large and all were surprised to know that Lawyer Edwards was present.

"After the pastor had spoken my friend said:

"I was profoundly impressed with the sermon of last Sunday morning and noticed with great interest the new note, which our pastor has struck in his preaching. I wish to say that I firmly believe that the Lord has opened before this church a door which no man can shut."

"He then told in a very graphic manner the experience, which he had at the banquet in a distant city, gave a description of it all, and repeated many of the missionary points which had been made by Mr. Smith and his classmate, the Judge. He explained also how his own Christian life had been practically made over by the experience of that one evening, and how he had determined to do mis-

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sionary work in the city and to give for others who were devoting their lives to such services.

"At the end of his remarks he read the resolutions which had been adopted at that banquet, advocating an every-member canvass of the church for gifts to all forms of missionary work. While he was speaking, the women who had been struggling against great difficulties for many years to keep up the missionary interest among a few of their sisters, exchanged appreciative glances, and a deacon leaped to his feet and said:

" 'I move that our church adopt these resolutions, and put them into operation at once.' "

"The lawyer gladly seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously. The members of the church were so happy that night that they disliked to go home and Dr. Williams remarked that it all reminded him of the hymn that tells about the day. 'When congregations ne'er break up.' "

"Well," said Mr. Dodge, "we are evidently not only in need of a laymen's campaign to stir up interest among the men of our congregations, but we also ought to encourage a movement that might safely sweep through the whole country and call it the 'Ministers' Missionary Campaign.' "

"Amen," said the two pastors, who were present, and Mr. Roberts continued:

"I believe that, the number of ministers who are not interested in missions is growing smaller every day, but my pastor assures me that there are not a few, who at least conceal very successfully their interest in this great cause, if they have any at all, and he told me only last week, that he hoped himself to organize a 'Ministers' Missionary Movement' to supplement the work of the Laymen's Missionary Movement."

"Good," cried Mr. Dodge, "I am happy that we two men have had the same thought come to us, and I should be glad to give some thousands of dollars if necessary to wage a warm campaign, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, until every minister, who doesn't instruct his church as to the needs of state, national and international missions, shall find it exceedingly difficult to secure a pulpit."

The Judge agreed, and continued:

"The fact is, as I see it, there are few ministers who are actively opposed to missions, but there are a very large number, who are half asleep on the matter, have little knowledge of the subject and possess very little power of initiative and enter-

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prise in pushing anything approaching systematic giving either for home expenses or for missionary undertakings.

"These spiritual guides of the churches may give promises at conventions and rallies, but their zeal soon dies out when they face the local problems in their churches. Some of them even seem to feel, I have been told, that a church that finds it difficult to get through its own year without a deficit for current expenses will simply increase its difficulties, if the church is giving for missions. Such brethren, however, should be informed that the experience of the churches that have been giving strongly for missions is that their own current expenses are met with greater ease than ever."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Roberts, "it is simply a problem of the psychology of the human heart."

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"Well," said the Judge, "that talk on a stormy night led to days of clear weather, I reckon, in that church, and I prophesy that your friend's pastor, Dr. Edwards, has just entered upon a new lease of life in his parish, and will find that the spiritual fruitage of his ministry will increase in proportion as he continues to keep his people informed on the world-wide extension of the Kingdom of God."

"Do you know what has been the result, Mr. Roberts?"

"Yes, the church has subscribed \$900.00 for beneficence, while its apportionment, which it did not formerly raise by about half, was only \$500.00. In the vestibule of the church a table has been placed, and this is covered with mission literature, with the young men in attendance, and strangers and all who worship there have a new impression of at least one purpose of the service the moment they enter the door.

"On Friday evenings also, at the prayer meetings, missionary books are sold at cost, and the fact is, the entire membership of that church is getting interested in something outside of themselves."

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"And probably," remarked the Judge, "that minister's preaching will take on new vitality, for I believe a man will never reach the dead line who has his preaching enriched by the ideas that missionary reading and study supply.

"The dead line passes from the path of the minister who has a vision. Any ordinary man whose sermons are seasoned with the salt of heroic lives will satisfy any set of people, who make up the average congregation. I have known several men of ordinary ability who have become extraordinary preachers, because their sermons were suddenly charged with the power that came to them from contact with world-wide ideas. The sermons that are saturated with life are seldom justly criticized, and the minister who draws his illustrations from the universe of life is apt to be universally liked."

"But what that lawyer of whom I have told you," said Mr. Roberts, "did for his pastor, has its counterpart in what another friend of mine has done for his minister. The man of whom I am about to tell you is one of my clients, and some eighteen months ago retired, as our host, Mr. Dodge, has from active business, although at a much later age. He had accumulated about \$600,000, and has

four children who are all happily settled in life.

"One daughter married a missionary and sailed for Japan last October. Her father supports them both as the representatives of his family in the foreign field.

"The second daughter is the wife of a merchant, who is a deacon of the church in the same city where her father lives.

"One son is a lawyer in New York City, climbing to the very top of his profession, and is quite likely to be nominated by the President as a Justice of the Supreme Court. His second son has just been taken into the partnership of one of the four largest banking houses in New York.

"The brothers are in the thick of Christian work and are giving more and more time, money, and thought each year to the work of the great missionary societies and to their respective churches. Both are exceedingly gifted speakers and are in great demand on all sorts of social and religious occasions.

"The banker can buy his father out two or three times, they say, and has only just passed his fortieth year. The lawyer, I judge, has an income of about \$35,000.00 a year.

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“When these sons learned that their father had retired from business on his sixty-fifth birthday they felt somewhat alarmed, for they well knew that a man who had been so absorbed in the details of an exacting business must be kept actively interested in some enterprise or be in danger of mental collapse. Soon after the news, therefore, reached New York, the son, who is the banker, went home to see what could be done to get his father interested in new and congenial duties. It happened to be New Year’s Day when he arrived, and he surprised his mother and father as they were sitting in their library in the evening after dinner. The room was lighted only by the log in the fireplace, when the son, unannounced, stepped into the room and threw his arms around his mother’s neck. Hardly were the greetings over, the latest news brought from both families in New York, and the last letter from the daughter in Asia read, when the door-bell rang and the pastor of the church was ushered into the room. He had been with the church seven years and was held in high esteem as an able preacher. Every second year he had obtained evangelistic assistance and the ingatherings had been large and continuous. He was a thorough student and an om-

niverous reader, but he did so little pastoral work, that the people had become very restless."

"As the four sat around the fire, a happy suggestion came to the young banker, who at first was disappointed, that he was not to be alone with his parents, during the one evening that he could spare from New York. But instantly it occurred to him that the coming of Dr. Barry was in line with the very thing that had been in his mind, and he said:

" 'Doctor, I am anxious that father should take on some kind of special new duties, and they must naturally be found right here in the city where he knows everyone. Now, if father should go to you to-morrow, and say—Pastor, I am ready to try to do any kind of Christian work you will mention and will put myself in your hands for four hours a day—what would you do with him?

" 'Now everyone knows father. He has been Sunday school superintendent, chairman of the board of trustees, held about every office but deacon, and I think you can find out something for him to do, some way by which he could be of assistance to both the rich and the poor in the parish and certainly to the poor, of which I understand you have

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a large number of families.' ”

“Before the Doctor could reply the father exclaimed: ‘Why Judson, who put that idea into your head? I also have been thinking of offering myself to the Doctor, but feared that I would not be adapted to any kind of work which he might suggest.’ ”

“ ‘Yes, you are,’ said the son, ‘you are just the man and have just the leisure to hew out some new thing, which not many laymen have thought of yet. You have standardized your own business and turned it over to younger men to manage. It now runs like clock-work and you are going to allow these young men within ten years to own the entire plant.

“ ‘Now I know that you can turn the same business initiative in a much less strenuous way into Christian channels. You are only sixty-five years old and have ten good years ahead.’ And then turning to the doctor he said: ‘Can you keep him busy?’ ”

“It really was one of the hardest questions which Doctor Barry had ever tried to answer, and he leaped to his feet, walked up and down the room several times in silence, and stopping in front of the father and son, said: ‘You have me up a tree. I

do not know what to say, and I do not know how I could keep any man employed four hours a day in my parish. And this in spite of the fact that I have been preaching in this city for seven years about Christian service as a proof of faith, yet I do not know what to say, when I am brought face to face with a tangible proposition like this.' "

" 'But,' said the banker, 'have you a business office in the church?'

" 'Business office in our church? I have never heard of such a thing!'

" 'Well,' said my friend, Mr. Brown's son, 'We have one in our church in New York and it has accomplished wonders. A retired member of my own banking firm is the man who runs it, and he is just father's age.'

" 'But our church only has six hundred members, and what would succeed in New York might fail in a city of this size.' "

" 'But,' came the reply, 'it will not fail and there is nothing peculiar in our church that makes it succeed. We only had four hundred members four years ago, but through the means of this business office, certain lines of Christian work have been begun, that have brought the membership up to over

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nine hundred and it is growing so rapidly that we are almost embarrassed with the numbers. We have already established three branch Sunday schools.' ”

“Doctor Barry was amazed and Mr. Brown said, ‘Tell us all about it Judson. Perhaps I can take hold and do that, and it would be such a relief to feel that I had some interesting problem to study and try to solve. I do hate to climb up on the shelf and get my exercise in cutting coupons once a month.’ ”

“ ‘Yes,’ said the banker, ‘and that is the kind of exercise that kills many a man. There is not enough of it. The very leisure of such a life makes the body and the mind limp. Father must do something—play golf four hours a day or do something—he must not live a life of leisure.’ ”

“ ‘Indeed he must not,’ said his wife; ‘Judson, your father must have something to take up his mind or I will lose mine. He is as nervous as a witch now and he only gave up his business ten days ago. If this thing keeps on all winter, by spring I shall be a wreck.’ ”

“Her son Judson, laughed as his father replied: ‘What your mother says I guess is about true. A man cannot stop suddenly going to his office at eight

o'clock and quitting it at six and dictate later, as I have frequently, to a stenographer evenings, and cut it all out on a given day, without losing his appetite and ability to sleep in about two weeks.' "

" 'Well,' said his son, 'to come right down to business, Doctor Barry, let me ask you a few questions: Do you have an up-to-date list of your six hundred members, and do you know where they all live, in this city or elsewhere?' "

" 'Why—no,' came the halting reply, 'I am not great at calling and I think my list is imperfect.' "

" 'Yes,' replied the banker, 'but I know the list you received, for the last pastor showed me the book he kept. It contained the names and addresses with street and number, of all members, the names and ages of all the children, whether they are in the church or not, with cross references of relationships and friendships, members in Sunday school, young people's societies, men's class etc., with an appendix, which devoted a page to each person in the parish and church, with suggestions concerning boys and girls who ought to be educated, etc.' "

" 'Well,' said the minister, 'I did have such a book handed to me, but I simply could not keep it up. It was out of my line, there was really too

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much work in it. Calling on the sick and strangers is all I can do, and I know the people are finding fault with me because I do not call more and because I do not know some of the families well enough to call their children by name, or even recognize them when I meet them on the street. I have sometimes wondered what kind of an experience a new minister would have, if I should die or be called elsewhere. I think he would have a pretty hard time to get hold of the parish.' "

" 'Exactly,' said Mr. Brown's son, 'I was about to draw such an inference myself. Now my suggestion is a simple one and it is this: Let father open an office in the church in the two rooms occupied by the young people's society, let him keep regular office hours, from nine to eleven and two to four. He has a trusted stenographer that he has had for years, who could keep the office open for eight hours a day, and whose salary he would be glad himself to provide, at least for the first year, until the results of the new enterprise could be tested.'

" 'Father and his stenographer could busy themselves the first month making a complete card catalogue of all the members of the church, Sunday school and parish and make a map showing the

location of each person who is connected directly or indirectly with the church. It may be difficult to get these facts, but they can be obtained by distributing cards at the various services, calling for the latest information. The few names which will defy ordinary investigation, his stenographer, who is a resourceful woman, will find ways to locate. This will furnish the basis for all future work.'

" 'Have you any list, Doctor, of the children in the Sunday school whose parents are not connected with the congregation?' "

" 'No, I have not,' was the confession, 'my only clues to those families, that they are indirectly connected with the church membership, is in the funerals and weddings which I have. I always try to call once after a funeral and twice after a wedding. I also try to follow up all reported cases of sickness.' "

" 'Well, these names all ought to be catalogued also, for we have found in New York that in working among these families, the only contact with which is through the children who come to our school, has proved the most fruitful labor that we have ever undertaken.'

" 'Do you raise money by pew-rents now?' "

" 'No,' said the Doctor, 'we gave that up two

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years ago, but the new free-seat plan is rather a disappointment.'

" 'Yes,' said the banker, 'I suppose that Deacon Butler, your solicitor, announces on January first, that the new envelopes are ready for all who wish to take them, and the result is that a good many do not do it.'

" 'Yes,' said the pastor, 'that is just the way, and strangers are not visited or asked to subscribe.'

" 'That is exactly the way it was with our church in New York,' explained Mr. Brown, 'the fact is, the free-seats and the weekly-offering method constitute the poorest way of financing a church, if it is left to run itself, but it is the very best if it is properly worked. But the fact is, it is not in Deacon Butler to do it. He is a good soul, but he can't do work of that kind. The work can be best done through the church office. We have found it a very small matter on November first, to mail out to each member or attendant a pledge card and a brief letter of explanation. We have the cards all gathered in and the envelopes sent out for the new year that begins January first, as early as December tenth, fifteen days before the holidays commence and before the attention of the people is

diverted. More than three-fourths of the envelopes are called for at the church office and the remainder are distributed the week before the first Sunday of January by a group of girls and boys, who want some Christian work to do and are delighted to do this kind.'

" 'The assistant in the office takes all offerings and enters them in a proper book and distributes to the contributors, through the same group of young people, a quarterly statement of each account. She keeps the envelopes also, marked with the amounts that they contain, as proof of her correctness, and the bunches are kept tied together and the accounts are audited by comparing the amounts placed on the back of the envelopes with the amounts reported in gross. The office should be open on Sundays also, and strangers asked to make pledges there and then.'

" 'Do you have a well articulated budget in your church, Doctor?'

" 'No, indeed, we do not have anything of the kind.'

" 'Well,' came the reply, 'through the office that father would open, this could be brought about within ten days, and everything set going as it should

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be, with suitable budgets carefully outlined for both current expenses and beneficence, including, the city, state, home and foreign departments.'

" 'In our church office a card catalogue list is kept of strangers and they are followed up through the same office in most interesting and fruitful ways. One of the first things we did was to obtain the names of the strangers living within half a mile and they received a written invitation, with a printed description of our church and its varied activities. The result was that our congregations began to increase rapidly. A telephone was installed in our office and on the first day five cases of sickness were reported. Committees, who had worked in the dark hitherto, found plenty of work to do now in the light of a new day. Our pastor daily turned in a list of all his pastoral calls, funerals, marriages and reports of new families which he had visited, and all these were carefully tabulated in our office. Our assistant, a very intelligent woman, to whom we are now paying a salary of \$1,200.00 has been very resourceful in suggesting ways in which the students in the city and visitors at hotels might be reached. Blotters bearing the name and location of our church are placed on the writing desks of

several hotels, and pencils of varied colors are supplied to the children in our Sunday school, each pencil also bearing the name of the church. These pencils are in great demand. They were given away at first, but are now sold at cost, and it is probably safe to say that over five hundred children have heard about our school, through those pencils, who probably did not attend any Sunday school at all.' "

" 'Well,' broke in his father, 'I would like to try it if the Doctor is willing. I can think of a dozen things you have not spoken of that could be done in this town to interest the people in our church, and I shall be glad to have my stenographer go down to the church with me and open up the office, if the pastor will call the Deacons and Board of Trustees together and arrange for it.' "

" 'Well,' said Mr. Dodge, "how did it turn out?"

" 'Exactly as you would expect,' replied Mr. Roberts, "Mr. Brown opened the church office and with what wonderful results! Within four weeks he had the parish catalogued to the last dot, and since that time the morning and evening congregations have increased very largely. They call the church the 'Strangers' Home,' and traveling

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men go fifty miles out of their way to spend Sunday in that city.

"The income of the church increased \$1,800.00 for current expenses the first year. The pastor is a new man and now loves to make calls. The city is districted, the church is organized for work and missions have come to the front. Last year the offerings jumped from \$600.00 to \$1,600.00, and this year they expect to raise \$3,000.00 for beneficence, and I believe they will. That church gave \$5,500.00 for current expenses last year and has set its standard to give an equal amount annually for beneficence.

"My friend Brown, gives in all about \$400.00 for missions through the church, but last year I happen to know that he gave \$1,000.00 in local charity and quietly sent \$3,000.00 for home and foreign missions. His son, the banker, tells me that his father has just gained a running start, that is all, but that he will be heard from later as one of the great givers in the denomination.

"Last Thursday I attended a Laymen's Banquet," continued Mr. Roberts, "in the city where Mr. Brown has this church office. Six hundred men who came in from all the churches for miles about

sat down, on the rainiest kind of a night you ever saw. Mr. Brown's sons came up from New York to be present.

"The son who is a banker was the toast-master of the occasion, and without doubt it was the greatest night the Christian forces in that community ever saw. The secretary of our Laymen's Missionary Movement gave a talk on 'The World-Wide Vision.' After he had spoken, Mr. Brown's son, from New York, the lawyer, presented one of the most powerful appeals for men to get busy and prove their faith by their faithfulness in giving to extend the Kingdom of God, that I have ever heard a man give. It simply sent the thrills through our souls and his father sat there with the tears running down his face.

"Mr. Brown wrote me recently that since the banquet six men in that town had made their wills remembering the missionary societies, and he himself is one of them. I happen to know that he made a very comprehensive will, after a conference with his son the banker, his son the lawyer, his daughter who lives in the city, and his wife: It is really one of the greatest documents that I have ever prepared. His father told me that when he

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and his two sons went home that night after the banquet, the mother, who was still waiting for them at a late hour, suggested that they have family prayers just as they used to occasionally, when they came home late at night, when they were boys, and the father told me that he never should forget to his dying day, the joy that came to him when he heard his boys lead in prayer, and declared it was just like getting a peep into heaven itself.

"Well, in a word," said Mr. Roberts, "my friend, Mr. Brown, is a new man, Doctor Barry is a new man, the church is a new church, my friend's family life has become glorified, for the conversation very largely in that home centers now around the great Christian enterprises, whose advocates are going into this and all the nations for the world-wide spiritual conquest of the whole earth.

"And all of this has come about since a year ago last New Year's day."

"Certainly the age of miracles has not passed," said Mr. Dodge, who suggested that Mr. Roberts lead in prayer.

When the simple, childlike prayer of a noble soul ended, a new vision of what his life might yet become raised itself above the horizon of Lincoln

Dodge's soul. It was the size at first of a man's hand, of a hand which was to distribute generously and consistently the accumulations of a fortunate and prosperous business career.

Searching for the Angel

Twenty minutes later, when the rest of the company had gone to their rooms for the night, Mr. Dodge and his friend Roberts left "The House among the Pines," and strolled down toward the village.

Here and there a cloud floated across the sky, and the harvest moon was bathing the valley below and the hills beyond in its mellow light, which, striking the river, seemed to turn it into a stream of silver.

It was about half past ten o'clock, and only a few lights here and there were seen in any of the houses.

The two friends walked slowly through the long driveway, and turned down the road that gently led to the first mill and village.

The silence was first broken by Mr. Roberts, who said, "How interesting it is that the English firm to which you have sold these properties will continue your interest in these people, for whom you and your wife have done so much."

"Yes," said Mr. Dodge, "that was one of the reasons why we were willing to let the property go,

for we knew that all our various enterprises for uplift would be carefully fostered by the new owners."

"By the way," said Mr. Roberts, "how has your co-operative store worked during the last year?"

"Almost perfectly," was the answer.

"The officers were selected by myself, the goods were purchased by my agents, free rent has been given to the store, which has been able, in its purchases, to get large discounts on my own personal credit. Prices have been lower than previously, \$600.00 has been allowed for customers whose families were overtaken by sickness, and no bad debts have been carried over. The town, too, has voted no license and there are no saloons now in any of the surrounding villages."

"How does the sanitation plant work?"

"Exactly right, and as we have planned," was the answer.

"We have drained the three villages through a large sewer pipe, and the reduction plant, a half mile below the last village, keeps the river pure for the towns that have to rely upon it for drinking water. Since you were here, however, we have filtered our own water supply, and I am now told

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that our water is as nearly pure as any in the state.

"We have spent about \$60,000.00 on the sanitation and water supply of these three villages, and the new owners, you will remember, are so delighted with the double situation, that they have paid the exact amount which the two plants originally cost."

Mr. Roberts was in a very inquiring mood and as he passed along continued:

"What is that large new house there, with several lights in it on the side hill at the edge of the woods?"

"That is our dispensary and hospital of twelve beds. We have two nurses in attendance, and a head nurse, who is matron. The local physician superintends it, and has a consulting committee of city doctors, the chairman of whom is our own family physician. It all runs smoothly, has greatly improved the general efficiency of the workmen, and has given us a happy issue out of untold perplexities which used to worry Mrs. Dodge about to death.

"The nurses and two others, who are training, act as district nurses in our villages and in the farming country that stretches to the north several miles to the tract of woodland, which I own, you

know, at the base of the mountain.

"Just at this time, we have several contagious cases in one part of the hospital, which made it impossible for the nurses to respond this evening to the call which Mrs. Dodge and Mrs. Arnold answered."

As they passed by two large buildings, Mr. Roberts inquired, "Are these the two new boarding houses you wrote me about last spring?"

"Yes," said Mr. Dodge, the one on the left is for men and the other is for women. The one for men is operated by the Young Men's Christian Association. The board of young men is guaranteed by our office, and I make an allowance through the mill office to the Association of \$1,500.00 a year, which pays for the salary of the secretary. The dues from the members meet the rest of the expenses.

"The boarding house for the young women is run by the Young Women's Christian Association on the same basis. Both are very successful and have straightened out the social life in our villages to a wonderful extent."

"How did you happen to make all these improvements?" inquired Mr. Roberts.

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"They did not happen at all, but are simply the result of some persistent study which Mrs. Dodge, Helen, Richard and I have been pursuing for the last five years.

"Richard and Helen came home from time to time with certain suggestions, and we all put our heads together, and these and several other things are the results. One of the Brown professors was very helpful to Richard in his studies in Social Science. We have instituted all of these improvements with immense satisfaction.

"One strange thing has happened, for my profits have increased during the last few years in proportion as I have improved the physical, mental and moral conditions of the people in these three villages.

"We have also banished, and with the approval of the people, all traveling shows from the villages, but we have developed local talent that furnishes all the amusement that is needed. We have rival baseball teams, rowing matches, and a general field day, at which I distribute \$300.00 in prizes. In the winter we have sports, and I have provided an outdoor skating rink, which is an artificial pond, kept clear throughout the season, where the young

people have a jolly time of it night after night, as long as the cold weather lasts.

"We have also stocked the ponds in the vicinity and the river between the dams with fish.

"Our latest attempt, however, is having a moving picture exhibition twice a week, at which an entrance fee of two cents is charged. This is supervised by a committee made up of the pastors, the doctor, the teachers and the secretaries.

"We have also monthly prize speaking contests, and have had four languages spoken in one evening."

As they were talking quietly together, a village watchman passed, and Mr. Dodge said:

"John, how recently have you or the day watchman arrested a man or woman for disorderly conduct, in either of the three villages?"

"Not for eight months, sir," quickly came the reply from the French-Canadian, who was trusted as the guardian of the peace. "At that time I had to pull in a man who was passing through the town in a drunken condition. A year before a woman was arrested, who brought in liquor from the city. It's a mighty dull business, this, but I suppose I am looking for fires instead of fiends, and am glad

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to report that both are equally hard to find in any one of the villages."

While standing, talking with the policeman, the two friends saw coming slowly toward them down a side street, Mrs. Dodge, Mrs. Arnold and Richard, who had decided to walk home, while one of the hospital staff was taken a little later to the city by Philippe. The ladies reported that the poor woman had been carried to the hospital, soon after the accident, but that they themselves had remained to care for the sick child until a district nurse could be called in from a farm-house, two miles distant, where she had gone to make a poor woman comfortable for the night.

Then these five, who had so much in common, and who looked out upon life so nearly from the same angle, slowly climbed the hill, only stopping once or twice to gaze back on the villages sleeping in the moonlight.

At length, as they gained the avenue that reached to "The House Among the Pines," Mr. Roberts stopped and said, pointing to the villages stretched along the river, "This is indeed home and foreign mission work, of the very first importance."

Then he continued, "What an age we live in!

We must, indeed, at our very doors, begin to live and preach the Gospel, and then make it possible for others, who are free to do so, to take it to the scattered tribes of Indians in our own land, to the groups of eighty or more nationalities that live in just such villages as these, to the multitudes who dwell in the larger towns and in the great cities of our country. We must give through our Home Mission Society, that the Gospel be carried to the frontier towns, to the lumber camps, to the ten millions of Negroes, to the Spanish-speaking lands and Islands of the south.

“We must be generous with our gifts and strengthen them with prayers and sympathy and thus make possible the enlargement of the Kingdom among all nations, by filling the treasuries of our Foreign Mission Society, that is able to do a vastly larger work, which its equipment and organization will easily make possible.

“But I am freshly impressed to-night with the fact that to give, that missionaries may go and labor in near or distant lands, is not to do one’s whole duty, for each of us must in a personal way take the Gospel to the servants in his own home, to the workmen in his office or shop, or to the place where

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he himself may toil for wages."

"Yes," said Mrs. Arnold. "There are two tests of it all. The first test of interest in missions, is giving that missionaries may go to the peoples in this or distant lands, and the second test is giving time, sympathy, and our own words of strength to those who are needy and near at hand.

"And then," she continued, "working by proxy alone brings on creeping paralysis.

"The man that simply gives but does not labor, soon becomes helpless.

"The heart that helps the needy nearest to our own firesides will not forget the neediest farthest away, and if we neglect to live for and give for our nearest and farthest neighbors, we shall, I fear, hear the Master say:

"'Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.'"

A few minutes later they were sitting at a table on which a little luncheon had been spread by a servant in anticipation of their return. The day had made its profound impression upon Richard, for his heart was filled with a new emotion, and images of what might be had been floating through his brain.

As Mrs. Dodge poured the tea Mr. Roberts exclaimed:

"A penny for your thoughts, Richard."

"I take you up," came the quick reply, "and will ask you how you became so deeply interested in missionary work."

"Yes," said Mr. Roberts, "I will tell you, although it would take a long time to give you the whole story. You shall have, however, the entire tale, if we can take an hour's walk together. But briefly I will say"—as he bowed to the ladies—"it was my wife who turned my attention to these matters, twelve years ago last Thanksgiving."

"Had she long been interested in the subject?" Mrs. Arnold inquired.

"No, we were just nominally interested in it all. We gave through the annual offerings, but we knew very little about the subject and did not care to increase our knowledge. That Thanksgiving day, however, Mrs. Roberts had a vision of service which transformed her very face and life."

"Do tell us about it!" said Mr. Dodge.

"Well, although we never refer to it, of course, in public, it is known among some of our friends, and I will tell you just how it happened.

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"My wife had a seamstress that had been with her for several years. This woman's left hand was slightly crippled; she worked slowly, but was so exceedingly faithful that she always found occupation at about a dollar and a half a day.

"Mrs. Roberts heard of her while the woman was ill in a hospital and brought her home for a few weeks of convalescence. She never spoke of her earlier life. We learned, however, by accident, that she had been left an orphan and had married a worthless fellow who turned out to be very cruel to her. He was killed while intoxicated, and it was after this tragedy that she was taken to the hospital. Mrs. Roberts would like to have made a home for the poor woman, but she absolutely refused to receive this, keeping a room, for which she paid two dollars a week, going about among six or eight families as a seamstress.

"The morning of Thanksgiving day, of which I spoke, she died. She had been taken sick three weeks before in our own house. The day before she passed away, she told Mrs. Roberts in confidence the story of her life, which I have never had repeated to me, but my wife says that it is the most pathetic tale one could imagine. A few moments before she

died she whispered: 'The pastor has my bankbook with fifty dollars in it; that will pay the expenses of the funeral and I hope will leave something besides for the church.'

"And then she explained to Mrs. Roberts her one anxiety, for there was a matter that greatly distressed her. She was urged to tell it all. What do you suppose it was?

"Each year while she had been sewing, she had given between one and two hundred dollars for missions and twenty-five dollars to the church. She simply lived for all these objects. Her income could not have averaged over four hundred and fifty dollars annually, if she had sewed every working day. Her living expenses, of course, were very small, but she kept that little room as her home.

"Well, Mrs. Roberts found that she had three orphan children in India, two in Africa and two in China whom she was supporting with ten to twenty dollars each a year. In addition to that she was helping a colored girl in Hartshorn Memorial College in Richmond, Virginia, and was also educating a boy for the ministry in the Indian University in Oklahoma.

" 'Well, well, my dear,' said Mrs. Roberts, 'do

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not worry about these adopted children of yours, for I will continue your gifts to all of them and take on others myself. I have often prayed for children, and perhaps these are the children that God wishes me to mother.'

"After my wife had spoken these words, she said that such a smile came over the face that had been drawn in suffering, as she had never seen before, and then a heavenly light rested down upon the woman's countenance and it seemed as if she must be looking upon the face of an angel. The poor soul never spoke again.

"Well, one thing is sure, that night the angels seemed to come to our home with their messages of peace. We two began to live in earnest. In a few weeks, by an irresistible influence that neither of us could quite measure, we changed our manner of living somewhat, and ever since that day we have had a new ideal for our home life and we have made it revolve around the kingdom of God, as we found it, in our city, state, nation, and in all the earth. I can only think of one verse in the Scriptures describing our home life ever since that day: 'Behold, all things have become new.' "

The story was ended and the silence that fol-

lowed was only emphasized by the ticking of the fireside clock and the faint roar of the water, as it poured over the falls at the first mill of the village, coming up the hill like the murmur of voices from another world.

Mr. Roberts rose to say good night. In a moment Mrs. Dodge and Mrs. Arnold also left the room, and Lincoln Dodge and his son found themselves alone. When the clock struck twelve they were still sitting in silence.

At length the father said: "Richard, I am going to draw my will before Mr. Roberts goes home, and I believe that I shall give at least a half million for home and foreign mission enterprises and possibly all of this for medical work.

"I have been unusually fortunate in my investments and in my business. For the time being, at least, I am almost care free, and shall be fully so after I have invested the final payments which the English Company will make next Monday afternoon to my bankers in New York. What better use can I make of a good portion of it than to devote it to genuine Christian philanthropy?"

"Father," exclaimed Richard, "it is magnificent to hear you talk this way! And what would you

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say if I should tell you that I had about decided to be a medical missionary when I get my professional training?"

Mr. Dodge thought a moment and then reached over and took his boy's hand, pressed it lovingly and said: "Richard, I hope you will. I should feel honored to have you thus devote your years. If this is the divine plan for your life, I will finance it strongly.

"God has wonderfully prospered me. Everything that I have touched for thirty years has turned to gold, and I must begin to distribute it wisely. In the sale of the mills I have safeguarded the social and moral lives of the operatives, and your mother and I both feel that we can turn these enterprises which we have fostered over to other sympathetic hands and hearts.

"During the next two years your mother and I will probably travel extensively, visiting various mission fields of our own and possibly other denominations both at home and abroad. During next year you will be occupied in your studies and Helen in her teaching at Spelman, while your mother and I will visit the missions on the frontier, study the work among the Indian tribes, see what we are

doing in turbulent Mexico, investigate the schools and Christian work among the Negroes, visit Cuba and Porto Rico, and make careful study of the immigration problem as it affects life in our cities and country towns.

"The following year, while you are still occupied with your studies in Baltimore, we will have Helen join us and go around the world."

"What a splendid plan you have thought out, father, and all so suddenly, too, like the other matters which have come to you in the past as if by inspiration, and which have been put into practice in our villages so quickly. What a wonderful thing it would be if I could take care of two or three hospitals, which you and mother might build and suitably endow, for example in Mexico and in China.

"And how wonderful it would be, father, if—." He hesitated and did not finish the sentence, but his father, as if by intuition, knew what was in the boy's mind and said:

"Richard, twenty-eight years ago to-day I met your mother for the first time, and fell in love with her at sight."

"You did? You did? At sight?"

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"Yes, right on the spot, Richard."

"What did you do, father?"

"Do?" said his father, "the next day I frankly told her so, and as she was visiting her mother's sister, I made the same confession to her Aunt Hannah also."

"What happened, father?"

"Well, nothing of course, right away, and there were some anxious weeks of waiting and exchanging letters with my parents and her parents. Aunt Hannah went into the matter very thoroughly, wrote east to several ministers who looked me up thoroughly, but all the time I stayed right there in the community and did my part of the work as faithfully as possible. Of course you know I won out in the end, and what a happy life your mother and I have had, and what two lovely Christian children God has given us!"

Richard lapsed into silence and at length said: "Father, why have you never told me that romance before?"

"Because you were not ready for it."

"How old were you, father, when that happened?"

"Twenty-two."

"Just my age!"

"Exactly."

Richard leaped to his feet and said: "Father, you ought to go to bed this minute, but before I retire I am going to call the dogs and take a long walk out into the country and perhaps a run on the return. I am really too excited to sleep and an hour of heavy exercise is what I need."

"But," said his father, "I am in the same condition, and if you will cut the run out I will go with you. I feel almost as spry as I did twenty-eight years ago."

At breakfast the next morning Miss Fessendon was reported as able to step without pain, but Mrs. Arnold had insisted that she sleep late and have her breakfast served in her room. At half past eight Richard ran his car up to the steps and asked Mrs. Arnold to accompany him, taking an hour's ride which would include a trip to bring back her husband, who was expected on the nine-thirty train. As they disappeared down the avenue, his father noticed that Richard turned his car out into the country which led to the road that ran into the woods.

A few days later Mrs. Arnold told his mother,

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that as soon as they were out of sight of the house, Richard opened his heart to her, and once in his excitement actually called her Aunt Hannah. He had made no explanation of this, but perhaps would sometime.

"Be sure and ask him," replied Mrs. Dodge, as she went off into a perfect gale of laughter.

At ten o'clock Richard repeatedly blew the siren whistle of the car as it sped up the avenue and a moment later was at the door. Miss Fessendon stood at the corner of the piazza leaning on the arm of Mrs. Dodge, whose husband hastened down the steps to welcome his new guest. Mr. Arnold brought with him a long box, which at once was placed in the hands of Miss Fessendon, who retired for a moment to her room to see what it contained, although she felt she knew what was in it. Three dozen roses, that was all, and a brief letter, which ran:

"Dear Friend:

The answer was what I feared, what I shall forever regret, what I richly deserve. I am not worthy of you. Sometime I hope to get back my faith in Christ, but how, when, where, are the serious questions. But God will give you some-

one worthy of you, whose life will be a rich complement to yours. I envy the man the hem of whose garment I know I can not touch. Perhaps, however, I shall dare to sometime and then, who knows but the old faith will come back to my life again. My sister and I sail on the Lusitania to-morrow. She will write you, and begs me to tell you that those happy days at Vassar, when you widened the vision of her life, will never be forgotten.

With wealth, station, professional success and noble inheritance, and yet how poor I am! How poor I am! How poor I am! For I realize that I lack the one thing without which I stood no chance to win the heart of a woman like yourself. Goodbye, and may the Christ whom I used to worship be with you."

A few moments later, bringing the roses with her, she smiled upon Richard, who was standing by his mother's side waiting for her return, and said to Mrs. Dodge:

"I would like to send these flowers to the hospital for the poor woman who broke her arm last night."

"What a lovely thing to do," said Mrs. Dodge.

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"I will send them down at once with Richard, whose car is still at the door."

"But why can not Miss Fessendon herself go along with me, mother, if she is willing?"

"Another lovely plan," said Mrs. Dodge, "and the morning air and a little ride is what would do our invalid a world of good."

"Yes," said Dr. Judkins, "I prescribe the treatment."

"We may not be back for an hour," said Richard, as with uncovered head he smiled to his mother and Mrs. Arnold. "I will drive the car very slowly and take good care of the patient."

As they disappeared down the avenue and turned into the road, that dropped toward the village, Miss Fessendon waved her handkerchief to the party still standing on the piazza, and Richard waved his hand. A few minutes later, he turned the car from the hospital toward the open country, where the road stretched off to the foothills of the mountain and the elms and maples gracefully arched the way. It was a cloudless day,



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